Youth Issues, Youth Programming and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's Role in the Dudley Triangle

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Bachelor of Arts
Yale University
New Haven, CT
May 1984

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DUAL DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE AND MASTER OF CITY PLANNING AT THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, JUNE 1992

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TITLE: YOUTH ISSUES, YOUTH PROGRAMMING, AND THE DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE'S ROLE IN THE DUDLEY TRIANGLE

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about an agency, a neighborhood, a group of people, and a set of strategies. The agency is Roxbury's Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), the neighborhood is the Dudley Triangle, and the group of people is children and teenagers living in the area. Over the past two years, DSNI has been working on a variety of proposals for responding to the needs of local youth. This thesis evaluates DSNI's planning efforts to determine whether current and proposed strategies are likely to fulfill DSNI's objectives, meet youth needs, and strengthen the social and physical infrastructure of the Dudley area. This thesis is divided into five parts:

Chapter one is an analysis of youth needs as defined by local youth, adults, DSNI staff and board, and neighborhood youth workers. Chapter two describes the services and programming currently available to Dudley area youth. Chapter three is an overview of the current status of DSNI, identifying DSNI's goals for itself as an organization as well as its plans for the neighborhood and youth. Chapter four is an architectural evaluation of the proposed East Cottage Street Youth Center, one of two community centers which DSNI plans to build as part of its overall development plan for the Dudley Triangle. Chapter five is a programmatic and organizational evaluation of DSNI's overall approach to youth development. Do DSNI's youth strategies fulfill agency goals? Are they effective in responding to youth issues? Do they help to strengthen and integrate the efforts of other Dudley area organizations working with youth?

The argument of the thesis is that the primary youth issues in Dudley are, in the words of one young Dudley resident, "safety , hope, opportunity, and respect." Service agencies adopt various techniques for providing these four qualities in their programming. Yet, funding and communications problems and the lack of neighborhood-wide safety, hope, opportunity and respect for youth makes it difficult for service agencies to succeed in isolation. Community development and empowerment organizations such as DSNI must strive to build these qualities, not only within their agencies, but also within the neighborhood.

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning on June 1992 in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the dual degree of
Master of Architecture and Master of City Planning
Thesis Advisors: Rosemary Grimshaw and Richard Schramm

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS...

Dedicated to my sister, Cynthia Lynn Spark.

Last fall, my sister Cynthia and I were sitting in the Westwood Public Library. I was trying to come up with a good way to begin my thesis proposal and Cyndy was organizing notes and gathering books for her class: "Opera--What's all the Screaming About?" Cyndy was going to teach this class over January to a group of students at her old high school.

The idea of the Cynthia's class was to make opera accessible, open, and fun. Cyndy loved all kinds of music, she was an incredible singer and a talented composer and arranger. She sang jazz, blues, classical, and popular music. She did a terrific blues version of "Happy Birthday" and a great jazz rendition of "Way Over Yonder." She was a manager too, producing shows at UCLA and in Philadelphia, running the rehearsals department at the New York City Opera.

This winter, my father said Cyndy didn't just love music, she "was music." He was right. There are a lot of things to love in the world, but nothing is as much fun as music. Cyndy was like really great music. For me, everything seemed all right with the world, everything seemed to make sense when I was with my sister. Cyndy is the most loving and extraordinary person I've known; her whole being is music.

While Cyndy was organizing her opera class, I was fussing over the opening line to my thesis. I couldn't get it quite right. So, Cyndy made me read various openings out loud until we came up with a first line that sounded good to us.

I wish Cynthia were here for the last lines of this thesis project, just like she was here for the first line. I wish she could have stayed, passed through all the stages of life, fallen in love, married, raised children, managed an orchestra, developed her opera classes, composed music, sung in jazz clubs and choruses, traveled to Italy, and spent time with her friends. I wish we could talk and take walks and figure things out together. I wish she had grown old before she died.

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Introduction

Founded in 1984 with seed money from the Riley Foundation, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is the advocacy voice for the 14,500 Boston residents who live in the Dudley Triangle area of Roxbury/North Dorchester. Although the Dudley Triangle is the poorest neighborhood in the state, the community has been traditionally overlooked by city planners because it falls between the boundaries of more established neighborhoods such as Dudley Square, Grove Hall, and Uphams Corner. In the eighties, intense city-wide development pressures, coupled with the abundance of vacant land in the Dudley Triangle, caused a reversal of this official inattention. As the city began looking to oft-bypassed Roxbury plots for potential development opportunities, Dudley residents became concerned that they would rapidly lose control over their community--either via the hands of outside speculators or through continued abuse and dumping on abandoned properties. This threat was the impetus for a community-wide organizing effort to attain control over neighborhood land and neighborhood issues.

The early success of this organizing process is evident. DSNI is renowned as the first community organization in the United States to win the right of eminent domain over vacant parcels in its neighborhood. Today, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is a community-based planning agency committed to the empowerment of local residents and to the physical and social development of the Dudley Triangle. Its membership base of 2000 area residents constitutes 14% of the people living in the neighborhood.[1a] DSNI's board includes twelve community residents, along with representatives from most of the religious and human service institutions in the community. This spring, DSNI celebrated the groundbreaking for 500 units of housing.[1b] Planning is underway for youth, economic development, and human service strategies. The next steps the agency takes will be in these areas.

Between fifty and seventy percent of the people living in the Dudley triangle are youth under the age of 18. Yet, there are only a handful of youth-serving facilities in the area and almost no locally available employment opportunities. When asked by youth workers and news reporters what the greatest problems in their neighborhood are, youth most often list schools, employment, and crime as their biggest concerns. Available statistics underscore the validity of these perceptions.

1a. Andrea Nagel and Gail Sullivan, Youthful Visions: Building a Foundation for Community (Boston, MA: Red Sun Press for Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, 1992), p. 5-7.

[1b] Ibid., p. 7.

National studies indicate that the school to work transition of non-college bound youth has evaporated in the United States.[1] This is a problem nation-wide where 58% of high school graduates do not go on to post-high school training and only 21% enroll in a 4-year college program.[2] It is an even worse problem in Boston where only 11% of public school graduates go to college.[3] For the African-American, Latino, and Cape Verdean youth who comprise the majority of the Dudley neighborhood's youth population, the situation is worse still. Only 3% of non-Caucasian graduates of the Boston public school system enroll in a 4-year college program.[4] Poverty is also correlated with low educational achievement, and 40% of Dudley families have an income which is below the poverty line.[5]

The inability to afford advanced schooling, in turn, becomes a crucial determinant of future economic status, particularly in an economy which is losing its manufacturing base. A high school diploma is not enough to ensure decent steady work at a living wage. This is particularly true for African-American males. Nation-wide, young male African-American high school graduates are employed at lower rates than Caucasian and Latino high school dropouts.[6] In fact, only one in five male African-American high school graduates who does not go on to college is able to find full-time employment within two years of graduation from high school.[7] According to the authors of The Forgotten Half: Non- College Youth in America, a study commissioned by the William Grant Foundation, the American economy has failed to "build bridges" for youth.[8] In neighborhood terms, the "inability to build bridges" translates into fatalism, the sense among young people that "absolutely nothing is happening out there." [9]

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[1]William T. Grant Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship, The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America, (Washington D.C.: Youth and America's Future, The William T. Grant Commisison on Work, Family, and Citizenship, 1988), p.19.

[2]Ibid., p. 10 and Youth Indicators, 1988: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth (August 1988), (Washington D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education, 1988), p. 52.

[3] Nagel, Andrea, and Sullivan, Gail, Youthful Visions: Building a Foundation for Community p. 14.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid, p. 5, and James R. Wetzel, American Youth: A Statistical Snapshot (Washington D.C.:Youth and America's Future: The William T. Grant Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship, 1989), p. 11.

[6] William T. Grant Foundation, The Forgotten Half: Non-College Youth in America, p. 19.

[7] Ibid., p. 21.

[8] Ibid., p. 9.

[9]From conversation with man in his early thirties who grew up in neighborhood. He did not want his name used.

One youth activist, referring to East Harlem, writes about the "lack of an opportunity structure other than the well organized drug trade."[10] Youth in Roxbury describe a similar situation in their neighborhood. In 1990, an alliance of youth and adults in Roxbury issued a report describing the concerns of local youth. According to one teenager cited in the "We Care Committee" report, "It is easier to get into a gang than it is to get into a program." [11] According to another, "We see people working downtown and in our neighborhoods on construction, but they're all white. Those opportunities must not be for us. We want jobs, not crack." [12]

While legitimate employment opportunities for youth appear elusive, the victims of Roxbury's alternate opportunity structure are disproportionately children and teenagers. With limited financial resources, decision-making power, and mobility, youth in almost any community are clearly the most neighborhood-bounded residents. The troubles of any locality therefore impact most heavily on children and teenagers, precisely the people who have the least official power to effect change. Wherever the locus of control for crime in Roxbury may be, it is clear that youth are disproportionately victimized by violence. Inadequate opportunity, low outside expectations, and the triple threat of crime, gangs, and drugs force children in Roxbury to be exceptional in order to be ordinary-- exceptionally responsible, exceptionally tolerant, and exceptionally strong in the face of stresses. To lead "ordinary" lives, children must be unusually disciplined, capable of walking away from fights, eschewing gangs, and accepting mistreatment from adults. As Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, former Commissioner of Public Health, says, for youngsters in these circumstances, the minor mistakes and confusion of adolescence often have "deadly consequences." [13]

Many youth in Roxbury must face the fact that adults cannot or will not protect them--from physical want, from mistreatment, from crime. Children and teens sense that "staying out of trouble" won't necessarily keep them out of trouble. Too many lives have been cut short, through early death or through the accumulation of overwhelming responsibilities too soon. The sheer size of the youth population in Dudley, the scope of the problems which youth must overcome, and the paucity of clear options for opportunity underscore the fact that youth concerns must be the centerpiece of any community development strategy for the neighborhood.

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[10]Dorothy Stoneman, "Proposal for Documentation and Assessment of Five Youthbuild Demonstration Sites," (Belmont, MA: Coalition for Two Million Dollars, 1991), p. 1.

[11]We Care Committee, "Building a Youth/Adult Alliance: A Report of the We Care Committee," (Roxbury, MA: First Church in Roxbury, August 1990), p. 13.

[12] Ibid., p. 14

[13]Deborah Prothrow-Stith and Michelle Weissman, Deadly Consequences: How Violence is Destroying Our Teenage Population and a Plan to Begin Solving the Problem (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1991), p. 63.

Ordinarily, community development is perceived as an adults' game, responsive to the sectors of the economy in which adults participate. Youth issues are understood to be the province of human service professionals, social work agencies, the public schools, and--when these three fail--the criminal justice system. Unfortunately, service, educational, and justice institutions are generally viewed as drains on local economic resources not as integral components of economic development. This is reflected not only in social planning for children and youth but also in physical development, the segregation of youth into facilities such as schools, boys clubs, and YMCA's--generally built as large scale institutions which are physically and socially divorced from the continuity of street life.

For DSNI, however, youth issues and community development concerns must be joined. To date, DSNI has been involved in a variety of scattered projects to involve youth in the neighborhood planning process. These include the active inclusion of youth in neighborhood events such as clean-ups and cook-outs, the development of youth focus groups to address youth needs in the area, the organizing of a Nubian Youth Group of older teens, and the implementation of a participatory design project with local children and teenagers. Last summer, DSNI developed a recreation program which is now being run by the Bird Street Center. John Barros, age 17, sits on the board of directors. Young children often drop by the DSNI office to see how they can help out. Most afternoons during the school year, there are always some children in the office, talking to staff and offering to work on projects.

Over the next five years, these scattered youth-oriented activities will take center stage. In the late eighties, these centers were formalized as part of the DSNI physical master plan and accepted by the City of Boston as the official plan for the neighborhood. More recently, DSNI-sponsored focus groups have discussed possible programs for the centers. DSNI's next task is to build the organizational and programmatic base which will make those community centers real. To do this, DSNI must identify the issues which children and teenagers feel are of primary importance in their lives and analyze how existing youth-serving resources do and do not deal with these issues. To the extent that existing organizations fall short, DSNI must be able to evaluate the obstacles which make it difficult for people to respond effectively to needs. Finally, DSNI must determine how a community center might fit into a larger strategy to meet youth needs and develop youth resources.

This thesis analyzes youth issues and resources in the Dudley Triangle with a focus on agencies which work with youth when they are not in school. This includes organizations that are available to people who have left school and groups which work with youth after school or on the weekends. This thesis identifies obstacles which make it difficult for agencies to respond to youth concerns and suggests issues DSNI should consider as it begins to incorporate youth issues into its community development strategy.

Methodology

DSNI's first responsibility is defining issues of concern. What do statistics like 40% poverty and 3% college enrollment mean? How do these numbers translate into individual experiences and voices? Although these statistics imply a great deal about Dudley, what do children and teenagers have to say about what it is really like to grow up in the neighborhood? Local human service providers have their own set of numbers. Many local programs have had their state and city contracts cut by 50% to 75% over the last five years. What is it like to be a youth worker faced with declining financial resources and growing need?

To provide a statistical framework for this thesis, I used national and local reports on the status of youth and on the problems of youth in poverty. The statistics on the Dudley neighborhood came primarily from DSNI and other local service providers. Because the aim in this thesis is to link these figures to individual voices and experiences, the bulk of my research is based upon interviews with 24 residents, workers, and youth from the Dudley Triangle, and upon review of literature, newsletters, minutes, and reports from local neighborhood groups.

Because I was not able to directly contact as many neighborhood youth as I would have liked to, I could not rely on direct one on one interviews for my analysis of youth issues. I therefore reviewed documents prepared by groups which have conducted youth roundtables over the past year. Several roundtable groups met this spring. Among these were the Persistent Poverty Foundation and the Boston Youth Roundtable. Citizens for Safety has conducted a basic inventory of youth services and publishes an annual Call to Action report. Several Roxbury-based groups have put out reports based upon direct discussions with youth. These include the We Care committee, a group of activists which has met intermittently over the past few years, and Free My People, a youth empowerment group based in Grove Hall. The 1992 Youth Congress, attended by 600 youth, most of whom were residents of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, was also held this spring. I attended the Youth Congress, spoke with participants at the Persistent Poverty roundtable and reviewed several of the roundtable reports.

Although these reports and meetings generally deal with issues confronting Greater Roxbury and Dorchester, not just the Dudley Triangle, many of the people speaking at roundtables identify themselves by neighborhood, housing development, or street before speaking. I was therefore usually able to determine whether a general comment about Roxbury/Dorchester was applicable to Dudley. The direct interviews and agency literature also helped in honing information about Greater Roxbury and Dorchester down to neighborhood specifics. In addition, I met approximately 20 Dudley children, ages 8-13, about a year and a half ago, when I worked as one of the facilitators of the

Dudley Young Architects and Planners project. Some of my comments are taken from my experience with this group.

To identify youth resources in the Dudley area, I used a map, prepared by architect Gail Sullivan, which is hanging in the DSNI office. It shows all of the non-profit agencies which are located within the Dudley triangle neighborhood, in Dudley Square, in Uphams Corner, and along Blue Hill Avenue towards Grove Hall.

CHAPTER ONE
Youth Issues

Youth Issues:

Leticia Hawkins , age 17, is a resident of Orchard Park, a public housing project located at the northern tip of the Dudley Triangle. In a speech at the 1992 Boston Youth Congress, she talked about what she and her friends wanted most in their neighborhood: "safety, hope, opportunity, and respect." [1] When other people in the Dudley Triangle talk about their concerns, some focus on jobs, crime, and public schools. Some mention poverty and family problems. Some talk about police and the media. Most talk about racism and the lack of financial resources. Eventually, however, almost everyone brings up Leticia Hawkins' four words. Youth problems are invariably linked to places, institutions, and people which reduce feelings of safety, hope, opportunity, and respect.

Unfortunately, too many of the physical and social environments with which youth interact can be accused of failing to provide one or more of these basic elements. Youth are concerned about the lack of available jobs and future employment prospects, the inadequacy of the public schools, the effects of violence and police response to crime, and the inaccuracy of media depiction of Roxbury life. The paucity of recreational and social facilities within the neighborhood and the racism Dudley-area youth confront when they travel to other neighborhoods are also central issues. Whether a child is from a family with resources or without them, whether home feels supportive or alienating, these issues cut across the community and create obstacles for youth.

Young people in Dudley want to be safe--at school, at home, and on the streets. They want to travel through the neighborhood without wondering whose turf they're on. They want to hang out with their friends and not feel pressure to get involved with drugs or crime. They want to be in public places without being hassled by police. They want to go to other parts of Boston and not be challenged or eyed with suspicion. They want to have their needs met without resorting to drastic measures.

It's hard to be precise about crime in Dudley. Statistics are hard to come by and perceptions vary. Yet, regardless of the actual incidence of crime, residents agree that the impact of violence is far-reaching. The violence which does occur creates a climate of fear which affects how adults view youth and how youth view themselves. Many of the major obstacles which young people in Dudley confront are related to the adaptive mechanisms which residents of all ages use to deal with fear. Youth joining gangs, children acting and talking tough, teachers undervaluing students, police mistreating young African-American and Latino men, and businesses ignoring or abandoning the Roxbury market, are all, on some level, outgrowths of fear. Yet, all these avoidance mechanisms

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[1] Leticia Hawkins, Peer Leader at Orchard Park Housing Development, at Opening Remarks, Sixth Annual Youth Congress; "Youth Beating the Odds," University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston, MA, May 2, 1992.

reinforce each other, creating anger, undermining hope, and paradoxically working to strengthen illegitimate markets as the only clear and proximate avenues to success.

While drug dealing and arson have traditionally been associated with the Dudley area, youthworkers agree that much criminal activity is generated and controlled in other neighborhoods and then brought into the Triangle by people who know that they can take advantage of local poverty and community mistrust of the police. According to Rogelio Whittington, a Dudley resident who will soon become the new executive director of DSNI, Dudley residents are less likely to be victimized by their neighbors than to be hurt by outsiders coming in to the community.[2] He believes that youth experience trouble primarily as they travel from the community to places such as Dudley Square or Madison Park High School or Uphams Corner.

Violence around Dudley peaked in the mid and late eighties, part of a Roxbury-Dorchester wide trend. This peak has been attributed to the infiltration of New York gangs into Boston, particularly the Grove Hall area.[3] In the mid-eighties, there was a "sense of drastic change" in the neighborhood, with New York gangs moving into the Boston market and selling heroin.[4] People associated with these groups made a great deal of money, and violence erupted as dealers sought to protect their turf. The area around Grove Hall, particularly Castlegate and Intervale streets became notorious, labeled as "murderers' row." Intervale and Castlegate are fairly close to the Jeremiah Burke High School, and the activity on these streets created a high level of anxiety for students traveling to and from school. In her book on adolescent violence, Deborah Prothrow-Stith, former Boston Commissioner of Public Health, quotes from an essay written by Makiya Adams, a Burke student. Adams writes "When I leave school in the afternoon, I try to find a safer way to walk home. But there's no safe way to come. No matter which way you come, you always have that fear inside."[5]

Although there are several identifiable gangs associated with streets or projects in the Dudley Triangle-- including the Orchard Park Trailblazers, the Copeland Street group, UNCV, and the Falcons--youth tend to talk more about general turf issues than about specific gangs. In general there is a great deal of fear associated with venturing into unknown neighborhoods. John Barros, a 17 year old Dudley resident , says " It's scary to go into territory you don't know, there are strange faces, you have to be really brave to walk where you don't know what's going on, you feel threatened. The media pumps a

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[2] Interview with Rogelio Whittington, May 27, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Rogelio Whittington in text are from this interview).

[3] Interview with Benjamin Haith, May 4, 1992.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Deborah Prothrow-Stith and Michelle Weissman, Deadly Consequences: How Violence is Destroying Our Teenage Popualtion and a Plan to Begin Solving the Problem, p. 80.

place and then you feel scared going there."[6] For most Dudley youth, the Orchard Park housing development, long labeled the worst public housing project in the city, is one of those places, customarily an obstacle to walk around not a territory people feel like cutting through. Fear of Orchard Park was highlighted a year ago after the murder of Charles Copney and Korey Grant. The gunman in this case, Damien Bynoe, and the two men accompanying him, were members of the OP Trailblazers. Youth from Dudley rarely interact with the children and teenagers from Orchard Park. In turn, the one thousand children and teenagers who live in Orchard Park feel cut off and stigmatized by the rest of the neighborhood. To respond to fear, people restrict their movement, walking around projects and avoiding unknown streets. The problem is particularly acute for younger youth, who often do not play, and are not allowed to play, further than two or three blocks from their homes.

Within the heart of the Dudley triangle, adults say drug activity and a sense of generalized threat are more pervasive than actual outbreaks of violent crime. People who work with court-involved youth say they're seeing much fewer people than they used to, in large part because of state and city cutbacks.[7] Although there is a new transfer law which means that juveniles who are involved in murder cases are now transferred to adult court, the Juvenile Court Clinic administered by Bob Thornell of Roxbury Youthworks sees all other youth who come through the Roxbury court system. According to Thornell, most of the cases he sees are drug crimes such as distribution and carrying and personal crimes such as assault and battery and assault and battery with a deadly weapon. He says that murder cases and property crimes are much rarer. From July of 1991 to April 1992, he saw 141 cases. These included 20 assaults, 20 assault and batteries, one rape, and four murders.[8]

Clearly, many crimes are not reported. This is particularly true of domestic abuse, rape, and abusive interactions between young people and the police. In addition, violence against children which is committed by adults are not included in these statistics. In the past, when the Roxbury court clinic saw many more youth, Thornell believes many of the people he saw were people who shouldn't have been arrested, people who wouldn't be arrested in other communities. Other people involved in the criminal justice system believe that there has been a drop in the incidence of violent crime because many of the hard core crime leaders have been arrested and put away. They point to the incarceration of people such as Darryl Whiting, who used to operate a drug business out of the Orchard Park housing development. Ben Haith of Drop-a-Dime says "Hard core gangs (are) not as strong or don't have as many members. Gangs are turf-oriented and protect their turf with violence because of drug activity.

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[6] Interview with John Barros, May 21, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to John Barros in the text are from this interview).

7 Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992. (Subsequent remarks attributed to Bob Thornell in the text are from this interview).

[8] Ibid.

There's less likely to be violence today."[9] Bob Thornell says " A lot of things have cooled out anyway, groups coming together, fewer threats, old gang leaders away. Younger guys don't pose the same kind of violent threat" although he adds that the drop in violence is only due to a drop in gang-related violence. Violence initiated by scattered and unorganized individuals has been unaffected.[10]

However, neighborhood activists don't always feel that the incarceration of major drug figures has such a substantial influence on street life. Geoffrey Bynoe , who works with youth in Orchard Park, calls the jailing of Darryl Whiting "one stone in the hole, we have the same problem as when Daryl Whiting was here. It's calmed down some, not a huge difference."[11] There continues to be an active drug trade around parts of Orchard Park and along some parts of Dudley Street . Drug activity has been cleared from Mary Hannon Park, a major public space in the Triangle, but it has moved to Leyland Street, only one block away.

Jose Palacios of the Puerto Rican Organizing and Resource Center points out that illegal street crime is only one form of violence, one way that youth are made to feel unsafe. As the adult facilitator for El Sol de Jovenes, a newly formed youth empowerment group based in Dudley, Palacios spends every afternoon during the week talking and listening to young Latino women and men.   Palacios says that when neighborhood youth began meeting to talk about the possible functions and roles of a youth empowerment group, they had many concerns they wanted to address: "drugs, violence, unemployment , poverty, inadequate housing. It was overwhelming at some point."[12] For Palacios and the youth he works with, "inequality in the neighborhoods" is its own form of violence, and any attempt to extricate street crime from the social context of oppression and inequality in which it occurs is bound to be inadequate. Jose Palacios says, "There is a lot of violence, domestic violence issues, lack of education, violence and racism, lot of people (are) beginning to accept as way of life, (developing) defense mechanisms, then we have a problem.. Plenty of youth don't inflict it, but are thinking about it, they're defensive, thinking I need to hold my own ground, it's just a way to survive."

The issue of survival is also brought up by everyone who works with court-involved youth.   Bob Thornell says "Youth will do what they have to do to survive." Victor Morales, a streetworker based at

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[9] Interview with Benjamin Haith, May 4, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Benjamin Haith in the text are from this interview).

[10] Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992.

[11] Interview with Geoffrey Bynoe, May 20, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Geoffrey Bynoe in the text are from this interview).

[12] Interview with Jose Palacios, May 28, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Jose Palacios in the text are from this interview).

Alianza Hispana, also talks of "people doing what they have to do to survive."[13] Ben Haith says youth are "looking for ways to live in the city." Survival needs, coupled with outside expectations and the lack of an economic infrastructure, make many youth who are criminally involved feel that they have no options. However, the vast majority of youth in Dudley are not criminally involved, and it is these youth who feel caught in the middle--threatened by other youth and threatened by the way adults associate violent behavior with young people. In particular, youth complain that they can't simply hang out and be together without adults assuming that they are involved in drugs or crime. Young men feel that adults, the media, and the police assume that they are bad and that after a while it becomes easier to live up to people's expectations than to fight them. Victor Morales says the men he works with feel,

> If you call me a gangster I could be. You think I'm a bad boy, well maybe I'm a good guy but I portray that gangster because I'm already sick of it, you gave it to me so I'm going to use it.

This issue comes up especially in police-youth interactions. Adult community activists worry about inadequate police presence, noting that Dudley is located in the Police Department's Area B, an area that has 70% of the homicides in the city but is only represented by 25% of the police force. Youth are more concerned about what police do when they are present. Issues of excessive force during arrest, harassment of people who are just hanging out, inappropriate search tactics, and unnecessary arrests are the issues most often cited. The problem was summed up by one young woman who asked Police Commissioner Francis Roache at a recent public meeting "How can we go up to a cop not knowing if they are going to help us or hurt us?"[14] Police, who are supposed to be associated with keeping the peace, are considered some of the prime instigators of unnecessary violence.

Conversely, gangs--popularly associated with crime--are not always involved in destructive activities. While many young men, hang out in groups, only a small fraction of these groups are organized for aggressive purposes. Benjamin Haith is the community strategist at Drop-a- Dime, a local crime watch hotline. He says

> (There are) groups which might or might not be provoked into violence, who help other members. (These groups are distinct from)... gangs which pose threat, hurt people and have no regard for people who get in (their) way and may be involved in organized criminal activity. Some people hanging out are deeply involved with gang/drug stuff that is destructive; other people are just hanging out with these people, maybe getting some money from people who are dealing but not really involved. Other groups of men who hang together might or

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[13] Interview with Victor Morales, May 11, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Victor Morales in the text are from this interview).

[14] Remark during open session, Sixth Annual Youth Congress: "Youth Beating the Odds", University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston, MA, May 2, 1992.

might not get involved in things depending upon circumstances. Other people are just friends who stay together and take care of each other.

Victor Morales agrees:

> Out of 12 kids hanging on a street, three might be into selling drug stuff, the rest are basically just friends, four might hang out just to get some money, not doing drugs, small percentage, everyone who hangs out (is) not in a gang.

Gang involvement, drug dealing, and criminal activity are often confused. While some gang members support themselves through drug dealing, others do not. Drug dealing, use, and abuse is not specifically limited to the gang circuit or to youth culture for that matter. In a recent Boston Foundation report, Kathy Mainzer, director of Citizens for Safety, is quoted as saying

> If you think about it, children obviously don't have the billions of dollars it takes to bring drugs into our communities...It's also important to remind people that parents are bigger users than their children. Sometimes, kids see the negative effects drugs have on their parents and as a result they choose not to do drugs. But they are plagued by the dealers anyway. So any movement to end drugs in our city has to be concerned with youth, but also with the adults who are the financiers and the biggest users.[15]

There are other problematic issues related to violence in the community, and an emphasis on gang crime downplays the importance of other issues. In fact, joining a group of other young men and women is a primary way that youth deal with their own fears. Being identified with a group provides a sense of psychological and physical security. Particularly when youth don't have supports at home, friendship networks are able to fulfill needs that aren't met by adults. Many youth and youth workers say that the word "family" is a better word than "gang " to describe these groups. According to Victor Morales, " I don't call (them) gangs. I call (them) families, deal with each other's issues. Some are positive, some negative..."

Jermaine Works, a City of Boston outreach worker who used to be a member of the Orchard Park Trailblazers talks about his gang involvement in similar terms. He says, "OP was like a big family, grew up since little, stick together... Trailblazers protected each other."[16] Yet, as in families, both good and bad things can happen in groups. Just as it is too easy to assume that all gangs are involved in crime, it is also too easy to simply divide groups of young men up into people who are members of

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[15] "The Confidence to Say No", Boston Foundation Report, (Fall 1990), Boston Foundation, Boston, MA, p. 3.

[16] Jermaine Works, opening remarks during workshop: "Gang Violence: Life in the Fast Lane" at the Sixth Annual Youth Congress, University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston, MA.

good gangs and people who are members of bad gangs. Groups that fulfill basic needs for many youth can also land them in trouble. Jermaine Works, for example, felt like being in the Trailblazers helped him identify "who your boys are" and he felt like he would always "be there for them." He nevertheless ended up getting involved in a fight, killing someone, and going to prison. It was only after his time in prison that he began to believe that there were other ways of "being there" for people in the neighborhood.

Now, as a youth outreach worker, Works leads workshops on gangs and violence with Robert Lewis, director of the Boston Community Schools youth streetworker program. This spring, at a Youth Congress workshop led by Lewis and Works, a group of thirty five Roxbury and Dorchester youth, ages 8 to 21, talked about their feelings about gangs. Three of these youth defined themselves as gang members and all thirty five said they felt that they lived on a street with a predominant gang. In response to the question, "What is a gang?", they gave the following responses:

> "A group of people who stick together"
> "People who have something in common like they like to play basketball"
> "People who hang together to get clout and respect"
> "Group of people with something in common"
> "People who live in the same neighborhood, hang out, and try to make a name for self"
> " A family that they never had"
> " A group who hang together and give something back"
> "(People who) want to feel wanted, needed"

When asked why people join gangs, the same youth say:

> "They want to feel wanted."
> "Safety."
> "So no one will mess with you."
> "Power "
> "People will know you."
> "Money."
> "Money and respect"[17]

What is striking about these answers is the fact that gangs, particularly those which have access to money through illegal drug sales, are able to provide precisely what community based organizations seek to create: a sense of belonging, community, identity, access to economic resources, and power.

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[17] Remarks during workshop: "Gang Violence: Life in the Fast Lane" at the Sixth Annual Youth Congress, University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston, MA, May 2, 1992.

In a sense, community organizers and drug-involved gang leaders are competing for resources of young people. When community based organizations, schools, and the job market have little or nothing to provide, gangs become more attractive. When established institutions cannot fulfill basic needs, natural longings, such as the desire to be important, to belong, to hang out, to fit in, to have basic wants fulfilled, are effectively criminalized. The strength of the illegitimate market is the flip side to the weakness of many legitimate institutions. Local politician Byron Rushing, quoted in the Boston Phoenix says, 'Gang stuff is the illegal side of CDC's.'[18] Bob Thornell talks about youth as being an eager labor force and describes drug industry as an "...industry that scoops up that labor force, a lot of times. Either we provide it on the right side or they'll provide it on wrong side"

For some, involvement in a gang seems like the only way to make money, to obtain things which parents and a low wage job can't provide. According to one Dudley Triangle youth worker, "Money was always an issue, it's getting worse now, people are wiping out people like there's no tomorrow and they're not really aware of what consequences are." The inability to determine consequences is often linked to the saturation of violence in the media. Everyone who works with youth that have been criminally involved refers to television and movie glamorization of violence and notes that filmed depictions of violence rarely depict the emotional aftermath of a shooting or stabbing. Deborah Prothrow-Stith writes, "On film or videotape violence begins and ends in a moment. 'Bang bang you're dead. Then the death is over. This sense of action-without-consequences replicates and reinforces the dangerous 'magical' way many children think."[19] On some level, the proliferation of violence means that this fictional scenario is replayed in the local newspapers. Someone is shot or knifed. People mourn. The news media is momentarily outraged. And then things settle down and people move on. The long term consequences of losing a family member or friend are not news. Neighborhood and city leaders react and make pronouncements, but it is difficult to see how those pronouncements translate into real change. Even when officials do initiate new programs in response to a terrible incident-- doubling the number of summer jobs for example-- the link between the event, the reaction to the event, and action is often not publicly clear. Violence at least is effective. It provides immediate results.

Summary:

Violence in Dudley is more than street crime and safety requires more than a police presence. Youth feel threatened by strangers and strange situations, by other youth, and by the police. Depending upon

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[18] Ric Kahn, "Lost Hope: Roxbury's 67 riots remembered in light of Rodney", The Boston Phoinex (vol 21, no. 19), May 8, 1992, p. 24.
19 Deborah Prothrow-Stith and Michelle Weissman, Deadly Consequences: How Violence is Destroying Our Teenager Population and a Plan to Begin Solving the Problem, p. 20.

specific circumstances, of course, youth may also feel threatened by family members and other adult authority figures.

Like adults, youth respond not only to what they can see but to what they hear about through television, newspapers, and local talk. All these sources condition what youth expect of the world and what they expect from themselves. As people who are in the process of defining what the world is and what roles they want to assume, youth are strongly influenced by external assessments. When adults de-value youth, expecting the worst from them, some young people will eventually determine that it is easier to live up to people's expectations that to fight them.

The adults who are charged with the responsibility of responding to crime are too often seen as additional threats rather than guardians. The sense that adults cannot function as protectors furthers youth fear and reinforces the need to adopt a defensive stance towards others. Joining gangs is one way that youth take it upon themselves to meet needs which adults cannot meet. Gangs fulfill positive and negative functions; they adopt positive and negative roles.[20] The strength of illegal markets reflects the weakness of other avenues to gain safety, hope, opportunity, and respect. Gangs and illegal markets fill a void, meeting needs which are not met by the local economy and community based organizations. They are localized groups which, for better or worse, provide affiliation, belonging, identity, and access to power and resources.

An effective neighborhood response to the issue of youth safety requires:

> •Development of responses to crime--both youth responses and police responses-- which do not create additional sources of threat;

> •More thorough and less sensationalistic information on the sources and prevalence of violence in the community; less glamorization of violence;

> •Development of alternate avenues to provide youth with opportunities for affiliation, identity, access to power and resources, and the opportunity to make decisions and initiate action with meaningful consequences;

> •Building of long-term youth-adult alliances which do not demean youth and which assume the best, not the worst, of young people, and

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[20] Robert Lewis, Coordinator, Streetworker Program, Boston Community Schools, remarks during workshop: "Gang Violence: Life in the Fast Lane" at the Sixth Annual Youth Congress, University of Massachusetts at Boston, Boston, MA, May 2, 1992.

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•Support of existing community-oriented violence prevention and crime abatement initiatives, which meet above goals.

Opportunity

For youth in Dudley, opportunity is elsewhere. People who want a good education join Metco and commute to the suburbs or they try to get a scholarship to private or parochial school.[21] Finding a job means going downtown. Even opportunities which are specifically geared to youth of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, such as LEAD, Inroads, and Teens as Community Resources, are located outside of the community.

Much of what youth do and accomplish is hidden because the fruits of young people's labors are often realized outside of the neighborhood. The resources of youth--their intelligence, energy and spirit--are being exported out of the community in much the same way that the economic resources of the neighborhood are exported outside. Within Dudley, the weakness of the economic base makes it difficult for youth to fulfill their dreams locally. Public schools, which should be providing educational opportunities and resources are considered "the number one instrument of oppression" by some youth activists.[22] In the words of high school senior John Barros, "School sends people back."

The lack of local economic resources and the weakness of the public schools impacts most heavily on people with the most limited mobility. While all youth are relatively less mobile than adults, youth living in poverty are the most dependent upon local resources. As in many communities, young people in Dudley are divided by class. Youth with parental support, resources and encouragement often end up taking advantage of schools and organizations outside of the community, while young people with more needs and responsibilities remain more locally based. As people leave the Boston public school system for other options, the separation of youth by class starts early.

Forty percent of families in the neighborhood lives below the poverty line.[23] For youth in this group, education is secondary to having basic needs met. In worst cases, youth are unable to concentrate in school because they are hungry.[24] Streetworkers say older youth may be given a job listing but not have the money to get on the bus and go downtown to respond to an opening.[25] The immediacy of these needs means that some children and young adults can't deal with education or training or job

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[21] Interview with John Barros, May 21, 1992.

[22] Staffmember, Alianza Hispana, May 11, 1992.

[23] Andrea Nagel and Gail Sullivan, Youthful Visions: Building a Foundation for Community, p. 5.

[24] Staffmember, Alianza Hispana, May 11, 1992.

[25] Interview with Victor Morales, May 11, 1992.

hunting until their basic needs are met or unless needs can be met in the process of learning.[26] Included in this group are the youth in Roxbury who are permanently or temporarily homeless. Also included in this group are the very poor. In Dudley, most of the poorest residents are Latino. According to Alianza Hispana's service statement, 48% of Latinos in Boston have a per capita income of less than $4,000 a year.[27] Alianza also quotes a Boston Foundation report which says 75% of Latino children live under the poverty line.[28]

Even for young people who do not have such dire needs, school rarely seems relevant to their lives. Harold Raymond, an urban planner and local resident, points to the inability of schools to do more than "warehouse" youth.[29] Alianza Hispana activists call the system " antiquated, medieval, not dealing with issues people are really dealing with."[30] In a survey undertaken this spring, Paula Robinson, a Community Fellow at MIT, found that Roxbury and Dorchester youth were generally very negative about their experience in school.[31] However, students were not negative about learning or education, and they valued organizations which helped them compensate for their school experience.[32] Robinson writes

> Youths are very dissatisfied with the quality of their organized and free time spent within the Boston Public School system. This includes their classroom activities as well as their study hall, home work, detention time, or other free time in school activities...Students have a tendency to make up for what they haven't learned in school during their free time after school activities and they are happy with organizations who recognize what is missing in their education and assist them.[33]

Youth complain that they are not learning anything in school and that their diplomas aren't worth enough. Statistics on the employment of Boston's Latino and African-American high school graduates--and the experience of youth workers-- support their allegations. Despite the fact that all local GED classes are full and have waiting lists, Victor Morales says a GED often just qualifies a youth to participate in another program. Willie James, Vice-President for Youth Services at Lena Park

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Rosa Ma Colon, "La Alianza Hispana, Inc.: Mission, People and Services", February 1992, p. 5.

[28] Ibid.

29 Interview with Harold Raymond, May 5, 1992

30 Staffmember, Alianza Hispana, May 11, 1992.

[31] Paula Robinson, "What do youth do after school", unpublished paper written for 11.401, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, spring 1992.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

Community Development Corporation, feels that "Nothing's good, nothing at all, to look at , lot of good kids, high school grads, even with those kids, nothing they can see and say. I graduated is only thing they can say is good."[34]

There are two primary failings in the school system. The first is simply a wasting of the resources of youth, many of whom are clearly anxious to learn. The second is a misuse of power by people in authority. Students complain that they don't have textbooks, that teachers make them buy pencils, that they are yelled at and de-valued.[35] Youth activists say that, while money is spent on technical advances such as computers, newer theories of education are ignored.[36] They feel that schools are stuck in formal, old-fashioned teaching methods which fail to deal with the world students are growing up in.[38] According to a staffmember at Alianza Hispana:

> We need to re-educate the educated, teach teachers. Teachers will let you play around, won't discipline. We need to explain to teachers again what their job is. It's common sense, you make me feel like someone in society and I'll act like it. People are yelling, angry, exploding. They are frustrated, tired, sick of going through things. There's violence in schools, kids try and fail. They can't concentrate, they have outside concerns like hunger, neighborhood violence and they feel like they're good for nothing.[37]

That many young people do in fact value education is clear. In youth empowerment groups such as DSNI's Nubian Youth Group and PRORC's El Sol de Jovenes, groups in which youth set the organizational agenda, education is a first priority. Youth want to educate themselves and they want to communicate what they know to others. John Barros, the 17-year old organizer of DSNI's Nubian Youth Group says "Education is what we're lacking here. Activities to boost self esteem, Black and Proud, Latino and Proud, Women and Proud stuff. We need a lot of that around here...all the education pieces. It's sad because Boston Public Schools should be doing this." Geoffrey Bynoe notes that the most popular jobs at Orchard Park are peer leader positions, jobs in which people can share what they know, counsel and educate their peers at OP and other housing projects.

Employment is also a priority. Evelyn Friedman-Vargas, executive director of Nuestra Comunidad says "Jobs are the first thing you hear about , everyone wants to work."[38] Yet, there are few local

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34 Interview with Willie James, May 18, 1992. (All subsequent reamrks in text attributed to Willie James are from this interview).

35 Staffmember, Alianza Hispana, May 11, 1992.

37 Ibid.

38 Interview with Evelyn Friedman-Vargas, May 8, 1992.

39 Interview with Mary Gunn, May 4, 1992. Interview with Harold Raymond, May 5, 1992.

employment options. According to Willie James, "There are no businesses where youngsters can say I can get employment, nothing good can see." Victor Morales says, " There is no economy people don't understand that." The lack of local options means that, as with education, much of the talent in the community ends up being expressed elsewhere. This becomes an issue for some younger children because their sense of possibilities ends up being extreme. Mary Gunn is the executive director of the Bird Street Community Center, and Harold Raymond is a Public Facilities Department planner and Dudley resident who has developed youth projects along Blue Hill Avenue. Both Gunn and Raymond say that the youth they work with view their options as lying on the far ends of the socio-economic spectrum.[39] They imagine making $200,000 a year and becoming sports or entertainment stars or they imagine being out of the system.[40] Following a middle road seems like a difficult path with few rewards.

Despite these observations, many Dudley area youth have illustrated their commitment to work in their community via their involvement in organizing and empowerment groups such as DSNI, El Sol de Jovenes, Gangpeace, and Free My People. When DSNI held its first youth focus group and called for 20 people to show up, 95 people came.[41] Almost all community activists who work with Dudley youth believe that young people in the area, while facing many obstacles, are an incredibly strong and positive resource. The issue is not that kids won't make the right choices but that not that many choices are offered. According to Liz Pollard-Howland, youth worker at Project Hope, " The sheer number of kids in our catchment area and their energy is both an issue and a resource...The youth have so much power if given a positive chance--the struggle is in having opportunities to give them."[42]

Summary:

Youth are deeply dissatisfied with the public schools and with existing employment options. Statistics on the experience of African-American and Latino youth in the marketplace support this pessimism. While it can be argued that staying in school is better than dropping out, it cannot be argued that graduating high school offers an adequate base for participating in the Boston economy. Youth have three options. They can use resources outside of the community. They can create their own alternatives within the community. Or, they can work to reform existing institutions.

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Interview with Gertrudes Fidalgo, May 8, 1992.

[42] Interview with Liz Pollard-Howland, April 2, 1992.

What children and youth need to know is broader than the curriculum that public schools are mandated to teach. Youth are interested in education which has relevance to the world they are growing up in and the choices they must make. Meaningful youth-directed education is the most desired activity in neighborhood. People are interested in teaching, communicating what they know and learning from peers and responsive adults.

Youth energy is too often exported outside the community, mis-directed, or simply unchannelled.

An effective response to the issue of youth opportunity requires:

- More learning, employment, recreation, and social opportunities which are visible, accessible, and direct--not deferred and abstract;

- Long-term organizing and development plans which are tied to immediate educational opportunities for youth. Any work process to create more opportunities in neighborhood should be its own opportunity. Long-term goals should be developed so that short-term gains can be realized along the way, and

- Local economic development which provides employment ladders.

Hope

Having positive opportunities which are visible, clear and directly present provides a base for sustaining belief in future possibilities. One of the most difficult problems that youth in Dudley face is that making the "wrong choices" can provide fairly direct and immediate rewards while making "responsible choices" doesn't protect a person from racism, doesn't always bring immediate gains, and doesn't offer a barrier from the capriciousness of the streets. Drugs and alcohol can lift a person out of depression for a while, dealing can bring quick money, and violent action is at least, effective action, a way of taking power. Quoted in the Boston Phoenix, civil rights activist Archie Williams says

> The teenager in '67 was a different animal...There was hope. You could try and lie to him and say, 'You can be whatever you want to be'....Today there's no way...There's a general malaise in the black community: 'I can't study my way out of oppression; I can't pray my way out of oppression.' It's birth to death.[43]

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[43] Ric Kahn, "Lost Hope: Roxbury's 67 riots remembered in light of Rodney", The Boston Phoinex (vol 21, no. 19), May 8, 1992, p. 24.

Instilling and supporting hope is probably one of the most important responsibilities that falls to adults working with youth. Geoffrey Bynoe, who grew up in Orchard Park, went to college, and returned to work in the project, tells youth that if they really care and work, they can have any life they want. Victor Morales also grew up in Dudley. He tells the men he works with that he knows it is hard but that he has been there, done everything they're doing, and he was able to redirect his life. Morales says, "How much positivity can you have when you come from the inner city and don't have anything to look forward to--however showing people, I did it, so why don't you do it too?"

Some youth workers are struck by the intensity of youth hopelessness. Other adults have the exact opposite experience and find that they are struck by the hope and energy of their young constituencies. To a certain extent, these observations break down by class. At the Bird Street Youth Center, where many youth participants tend to have a high level of need, Mary Gunn held a rap session following the murder of Charleston Sargeant and the riots in Los Angeles. She says the boys in the group expressed the feeling that " This is the way life is, is going to be, nothing's ever going to change. "[44]   She believes that the youth she works with have a heightened sense of hopelessness, that they don't see themselves as the future, and as an adult, she struggles to understand how youth can feel so dejected so early in life.   Conversely, at Project Hope and DSNI, Liz Pollard-Howland and Andrea Nagel are impressed with the energy and convictions of local youth. After meetings with neighborhood youth, both Nagel and Pollard-Howland frequently think to themselves: Was I this aware and put together when I was this age?[45]   Both women say that the youth they work with are positive about the diversity of the neighborhood, aware of the strength and warmth that lies within the neighborhood's families, and excited about any opportunity to work with and contribute to the community.

Summary:

There are high levels of hope and hopelessness within Dudley. These co-exist within the community and sometimes within people. Youth need to believe in a future, a fight worth fighting, and a vision of what might be.

An effective response to issue of youth hope must:

> • Emphasize follow through and long-term commitments. Youth programming should allow youth to set goals for themselves and the community. Adults should work with youth to develop and more importantly implement plans for meeting individual and community goals. Telling youth that you can get things via hard work is not as important as offering the chance to set and achieve goals;

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44 Interview with Mary Gunn, May 4, 1992.

45 Interview with Liz Pollard-Howland, April 2, 1992. Interview with Andrea Nagel, May 1, 1992.

• Match youth with adults who share their interests and are willing to help provide information and open doors to the world of work, and

• Match older teens with youth just entering their teens.

John Barros says of the Dudley Triangle: "Here you can be told what you are. You're being told by society what you are and what you can do." Youth are limited by the low expectations placed on them. The vast majority of youth in the area, who are attending school, dealing with adult responsibilities and decisions, and just going about daily life, are generally unrecognized. Most adolescents in any community feel unsure of themselves. Youth workers in Dudley say neighborhood teenagers feel especially unsure, that they have internalized a sense of their own inability and worthlessness. Gertrudes Fidalgo, one of DSNI's community organizers and adult facilitator of the Nubian Youth Group says members of the youth group feel especially critical of the local neighborhood leadership for contributing to this problem by not proactively supporting local youth.[46] They feel that church leaders and political figures react in the newspapers but they aren't really working continuously; they aren't physically in the neighborhood, working for change. John Barros says

> Black leaders aren't crying anymore so people think we finally shut those black people up, because the leaders shut up. They have to take a risk, make some change. Malcolm X was the base for Martin Luther King. There's no Malcolm X anymore, nobody trying to push for the extreme a little bit so things will wind up in the middle. They're just sitting up there, nothing is being done...Bill Owens should have a new bill every week. They shouldn't be waiting till someone gets hurt. And, you can't tell me that we are so bad that Madison Park has to be that way. They think, oh they (youth) don't want to do anything so why should we do for them. Leaders stay quiet, then people think, if the leaders are quiet, I must be the problem.

Low self esteem is an issue commonly mentioned by youth activists. For youth trying to figure out how they would like to fit in the world, understanding when to take personal responsibility and when to blame social injustice can't always be clear. It is natural for young children to equate being treated badly with being bad. In an environment where adult authority figures persistently undervalue youth, it is not hard to see how youngsters would continue to feel that they are bad as they grow into adolescence. As teenagers, youth are often told to "stay positive" and "take responsibility." While it is good to accept personal responsibility for one's own life, these exhortations deny the reality of people

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[46] Interview with Gertrudes Fidalgo, May 8, 1992. (All subsequent remarks attributed to Gertrudes Fidalgo in text are from this interview).

who are dealing with pain, deny the right people have to feel angry, confused, and depressed. They also deny the fact that many youth are dealing too many, not too few, responsibilities. Without an adult analysis of the social forces impacting upon the neighborhood, without understanding when taking responsibility is living up to the basic requirements of being an adult and when it means taking on roles teenagers in more privileged communities do not have to play, these adult directives are as hollow and disrespectful as more direct put-downs.

Issues of respect are perhaps more severe outside of the neighborhood due to racism issues. One member of DSNI's Nubian Youth Group was thrown down a set of stairs at Don Bosco High School by a white student and left unconscious. Other children feel challenged or feared when they venture into Greater Boston. Gertrudes Fidalgo says "They get really sad, when they are out of this community, kids want to fight them, they say oh you think you're so tough because you're from Roxbury, or kids are afraid of them. Kids from Dudley say we don't understand, we want to be their friends." Violence against neighborhood youth comes from outside the community as well as from within.

Finally, there is simply a lack of recognition of the talents , strengths, and resources of ordinary kids, people who aren't calling attention to themselves by doing exceptionally well or exceptionally poorly. While a lot that is wrong in the neighborhood impacts most heavily upon youth, a lot that is right in neighborhood is expressed through them. When adults in the Dudley Triangle are asked about neighborhood strengths, "the youth" is always the first strength mentioned. Youth have energy, interests, and ideas which are often untapped. DSNI staff talk about children calling up the office daily to ask if there is any work they can help out with. In fact, at one neighborhood clean-up day, 80 kids were lined up outside the DSNI office before the first DSNI staff person arrived at 9:00 AM. Workers at the Ideal Sub Shop, which opens early and is directly across the street from DSNI, said many of the youth had been there waiting since 6:00 AM.

Summary:

Adult attention, support , and interest shouldn't be reserved for those who are doing exceptionally well or exceptionally poorly. Academic and athletic prowess should not be the only acceptable ways to gain adult recognition.

An effective response to issue of youth respect must involve:

       •Decision-making opportunities for youth over the issues which affect their lives via incorporation of youth representatives into the boards of neighborhood-based community

organizations, including youth serving organizations, community development corporations, chambers of commerce, school committees;

•Recognition of the adult roles and responsibilities many youth have to play; and

• High expectations, along with an expressed belief that youth can meet those standards.

Chapter summary:

There are two components to "Youth issues" The first is addressing problems and unmet needs that youth must deal with. The second is valuing and utilizing youth as a resource. While these issues can be addressed separately, they can also be considered together. The failure to provide safety, hope, opportunity, and respect in residential, public, educational, and work settings invariably creates obstacles. When these four elements are provided, youth respond. Youth programs must address safety, hope, opportunity, and respect as neighborhood-wide issues. Successful programs must also be able to provide these four qualities in-house. Essentially, each agency, school, home that provides these four is a building block for a community that does the same.

CHAPTER TWO
Youth Resources

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of several of the major youth-serving agencies already operating in the Dudley Triangle area. It describes the specific services agencies offer and the number of people served by available programs. It identifies different youth work approaches and defines how these approaches condition the way agencies deal with issues of safety, hope, opportunity and respect.

This chapter reviews the main obstacles which make it difficult for agencies to carry out their missions. It also discusses non-programmatic neighborhood resources which provide support to neighborhood youth.

Youth Serving Agencies

If you look at a map of the Dudley Triangle neighborhood, the area seems to be ringed with institutions, services, churches and schools all designed to support the well-being of the children and adults who live in the area. In Dudley Square, several large buildings are dedicated to youth. Two of these are Roxbury Children's Services and Roxbury Boys and Girls Club. Across the street, the office building at 90 Warren Street is rented primarily to local non-profits: the Urban League, Drop-a-Dime, Greater Roxbury Development Corporation, and the Young Father's Program. Roxbury Youthworks, a program serving court-involved youth, is a few doors down the street. The Dudley Public Library is nearby.

Down Dudley Street, several store-fronts are occupied by non-profits. Near the corner of Dudley Street and Blue Hill Avenue, Nuestra Comunidad has two storefronts--one for its community development activities, the other for its after school programs. Next door, the Puerto Rican Organizing Resource Center, Latino Parent Association, and El Sol de Jovenes share an office. Alianza Hispana is next door, occupying a converted firehouse. A parochial school and a local health center are located on the hill behind Alianza . WAITT (We Are in This Together) House is nearby. St. Patrick's Church, rectory, and nunnery are across the street from Alianza. The Mason School and pool are located a ten minute walk down the hill behind the church.

The former Cape Verdean Center, a large community building with a racing track and gym is on Dudley Street too, but it is boarded up. Near Orchard Park, there are two community centers, one run by the Lena Park Community Development Corporation, the other operated by Orchard Park United Tenants. This May, Orchard Park United Tenants celebrated the expansion of its community center.

Morgan Memorial has a building just north of Orchard Park, with a large light tree-filled hall that can be rented for community functions.

The Emerson School is a few blocks further down Dudley Street. DSNI has a storefront on Dudley--across from the Defenders of the Faith Church and near a local street ministry. The former Escuelita Agueybana, now flooded and boarded up, is a block away. Mary Hannon Park, a large public space, is one block further, and another neighborhood church fronts on the park. Project Hope, a nunnery serving homeless and once-homeless families, is around the corner. Project Hope has built affordable housing along their street and operates an after school program for children on neighboring streets. They refer older youth to St. Paul's, located on the hill behind Project Hope.

Uphams Corner is down Dudley Street about 10 blocks. More community development agencies and non-profits are located here. These include the Dorchester Bay EDIC, Uphams Corner Neighborhood Housing Services, Uphams Corner Community Health Center and Uphams Corner Library. The Cape Verdean Association of New England is also in this neighborhood. Pilgrim Congregational Church runs daycare programs. The Bird Street Community Center operates an after-school drop-in center with an emphasis on tutoring and sports. The Strand Theater is here, and a bowling alley has just opened up.

Grove Hall is at the outer west edge of the area defined as the Dudley Triangle. The Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Gangpeace, and Free my People are situated here. There are family day cares located in houses scattered throughout the Dudley neighborhood, along with several small tot lots, community gardens, and parks.

It appears that there is a great deal out there to meet youth needs. But, many people who live and work in Dudley say there is "just about nothing" for neighborhood youth--no recreation opportunities, no social outlets.[1] Human service providers say that all their programs are full, that they have to turn people away from their centers, that there are long waiting lists for all essential services from GED to substance abuse treatment. Teenagers point out that few institutions are geared for what's really needed in the area, that most people don't use existing services, and that young people are never consulted in program planning.[2] Social workers say that there are few "safe structured places to just be a kid."[3] Streetworkers feel that they are often working in isolation.[4]

Why does what appears to be so much social service infrastructure end up adding up to so little?

[1] Interview with Evelyn Friedman-Vargas, May 8, 1992.
[2] Interview with Bill Batson, May, 18, 1992. Interview with John Barros, May 21, 1992.
[3] Interview with Liz Pollard-Howland, April 2, 1992.
[4] Interview with Victor Morales, May 11, 1992.

In part, the issue is simply one of scale. According to DSNI's "youth issues, the facts" publicity kit: "50-75% of this neighborhood is youth under 19 years of age." [5] There are 14,500 people living in Dudley. Depending upon whether the youth population is indeed 50% or 75% of the population, anywhere from 7,000 to 10,500 of the people who live in Dudley are under the age of 19. The resources in the Dudley Triangle and abutting communities, when added together, are able to serve only a fraction of this population. Although there are many agencies, few of these groups have substantial staffs whose primary responsibility is working one on one with children and teenagers. Several groups have only one person working full-time on youth issues. Counting agencies gives a misleading perception. Counting the number of people working one on one with youth or the number of hours per week that programs are running or the number of youth actively served gives a much different impression. For example, there are only two streetworkers serving Uphams Corner and the Dudley Triangle. Edwin Diaz is based at Bird Street and Victor Morales is at Alianza. While the City of Boston has roving streetworkers, these men serve the entire city of Boston and generally come into a neighborhood only after a crisis has occurred. There are no drop-in youth resources specifically within the Dudley Triangle.

A further problem is that many agencies which include the Dudley Triangle in their catchment area are not considered accessible by local youth. Young Dudley residents feel uncomfortable walking to Uphams Corner or Dudley Square. Some youth worry that they will get hassled along the way. Others worry about how they are treated when they arrive. Different agencies are understood to "belong" to different ethnic groups , and youth often don't feel comfortable crossing ethnic boundaries, claiming they are harassed by other kids who tell them they don't belong. Alianza Hispana, PRORC, and Nuestra Comunidad are obviously Latino-based agencies. Uphams Corner resources are used by the African-American and Cape Verdean community. Orchard Park's resources are used only by residents of that project. Dudley Square is considered too far, and youth and youth workers say there are too many people just running around the Boys and Girls Club.[6] Grove Hall is also too far and has been associated with too much violence.

Because fear limits children's movements, existing agencies always either provide transportation to their agencies or work with a very local population. The issue of security comes up within community centers also. Some Dudley Triangle youth say that Bird Street Community Center, located in Uphams Corner, is not well supervised. A violent incident involving youth who used Bird Street occurred

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[5] "Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative: Putting the Pieces Together, Fact Sheet: Community Development--Working with Our Youth"

[6] Lynette Crosby, Paula Robinson, and Brian Wise, "Research Topic: What Youths Do After School," written for course 11.401, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, p. 2; and Interview with Geoffrey Bynoe, May 20, 1992.

behind the building last fall. The murder this spring of a young musician in Uphams Corner involved several young men who were well known to the youth who customarily hang out at Bird Street. While the staff at Bird Street is working very intensively on responding to youth fears and concerns, this violence has created bad associations.

Furthermore, Dudley's diversity means that youth have different needs. Agencies end up choosing sub-groups within the population to serve. Some agencies respond to "problem kids," people who have been court-involved. Other agencies, particularly those which are funded by more conservative funding sources such as the United Way, deal with youth who are "high end" youth, people who will probably go to college and need scholarship assistance, students who are often being schooled outside the community.[7] The people who are the most underserved are those who are in the middle. For these youth, there is little in the neighborhood beyond sports leagues. According to John Barros,

> There are programs for kids that are really messed up, over the edge, and people are trying to pull them back, like drug rehab. Programs in the middle (are programs where kids can) play sports and video games. There is nothing to guide kids to the future, to help them out so they can help themselves...If you want to join a baseball team you can join a baseball team, but it's just sports basically. Sports help you while you're playing. Everyone thinks oh, we'll build a baseball court or gym. But, it doesn't help long term.

Barros points out that the gap between being "in the middle" and being a high end kid who is getting encouragement and moving towards what he or she really wants to do in life is considerable. To bridge that gap requires education, supports, and self development opportunities which are not available in the neighborhood.

Rogelio Whittington agrees that agencies are overlooking the needs of people in the middle. He says, "Services are not available to all people in community, people who work--their needs don't get met, agencies dealing with certain kinds of issues and kids but not others. Agencies want to deal with 'the problem kids', but no one is concentrating on kids who are kind of doing okay."

Yet, people who work with court-involved kids and street gangs feel that their population is not well served either. Bob Thornell says that "not much out there that's strong enough to do what our kids need" Resources are drying up, and Juvenile Court psychologists find it harder and harder to follow through on the referral portion of their work.[8] Victor Morales believes that adults find streetwork intimidating and so few people are actively pursuing hands-on work in the streets. He points to Boston Community Schools, the AIDS Action Committee, and the outreach program at English High

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[7] Interview with Harold Raymond, May 5, 1992.
[8] Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992.

as exceptions but feels that little else is around. Thornell says that adults are uncomfortable with youth who present themselves defensively and it is difficult to find groups really committed to working with the more resistant youth who come through the Roxbury Youthworks program. Roxbury Youthworks, the Club program on Shawmut Avenue in the South End, Youthbuild, Just-a-Start in Cambridge, and Gangpeace are cited as the most responsive programs for youth who have heavy needs and may have been court-involved.[9]

Summary:

Although there are programs available to respond to youth issues, these programs are not enough. Some are too far away; others simply don't have enough slots. The vast majority of youth in Dudley, those who are not doing exceptionally well or exceptionally poorly, are often ignored. Agencies mandated to meet the needs of people who have been court-involved can only respond to a fraction of youth.

Youth programs:

Agencies which do operate in and around the Dudley area have adopted a variety of different approaches for responding to children and teenagers. There are service-based and preventative programs, crisis intervention services, and empowerment groups. There are also street-based outreach programs and organizations which adopt a whole needs approach to youth problems.

Service-Based and Preventative Programs

Service based programs provide a specific service for a set number of youth. These programs generally operate according to funding cycles, so that people in these programs are eventually cycled out of them. Substance abuse training, AIDS education, GED classes, and counseling are all service-based programs. Job readiness and job training programs are often also service-based.

Many agencies which offer service-based programs also offer preventative programs. After school programs often fit into this model. They offer a variety of activities: sports leagues, crafts, tutoring, field trips, group discussions. Some work on a drop-in basis. Others work with a set number of youth who join the program for a period of time.

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[9] Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992; Interview with Victor Morales, May 11, 1992, Interview with Bob Thistle, June 4, 1992.

Within Dudley, there are several established human service providers: Alianza Hispana, Lena Park Neighborhood House, and WAITT House. The Orchard Park Tenants United has developed its own youth program at the housing development, and Nuestra Comunidad runs some after school and work readiness programs for youth living in its developments. Several afternoons a week, Project Hope and St. Paul's run after school groups for a limited number of youth The Bird Street Community Center in Uphams Corner and the Roxbury Boy's and Girl's Club in Dudley Square are the primary drop-in resources in the area.

These programs are configured as follows:

Alianza Hispana's youth department has four steady programs. They run an after school program for 24 children (ages 6-12) , counseling for 20 youth (ages 12-20) drug, alcohol, and AIDS education for 100 students ages 12-21. Alianza also has a computer room and offers GED classes In the summer, about 25 youth 14-21 are funded through ABCD as summer counselors at Alianza's summer camp at Hale Reservation in Westwood.

Victor Morales, a streetworker, is based at Alianza. He runs a Wednesday night movie night and discussion group. He also works one on one with youth 17-28, helping them with jobs, housing, court involvement, and any other needs.

Alianza's programs are open to all Latino youth in Boston.

Lena Park Neighborhood House at Orchard Park runs daycare, after school, and recreation programs. Thirty seven children (ages 2 1/2-5) are in daycare which runs from Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Fourteen youth ages 6-14 are involved in after school day care which is available from 2:00 to 6:00 Mondays through Fridays. A recreation program serves an additional 45-50 youth who may use the building from 2:00 to 8:00 on weekdays. The recreation program is mostly sports--football, baseball, basketball, and video games. Tutoring is available for youth who are having problems in school.

Youth attending Lena Park programs live on the streets between Orchard Park and Quincy Street. No Orchard Park tenants use Lena Park's services.

Orchard Park United Tenants Association is a combination service/empowerment group. Youth programs in Orchard Park have traditionally been run out of the project's management office

and offered during the day. This spring, the tenants association acquired and renovated a building for use as a community center. Programming is therefore being extended into the evenings, when youth would ordinarily have no option other than hanging out in the streets.

During the year, Orchard Park operates a youth program with sports leagues, bimonthly workshops, and mandatory daily tutoring During the summer, Orchard Park focuses on a summer mini-camp, afternoon and evening sports leagues, field trips, and annual summer Unity Day event.

One thousand youth under the age of 17 live in Orchard Park. Approximately, 300-350 participate in winter programs, which run from 11:00-9:00 daily. Summer programs run from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM in the evening. 500-600 people attend. There are four youth workers.

Before getting involved in recreation and gym programs, all Orchard Park students from 4th to 9th grades have to go through a mandatory tutoring program. Orchard Park adult facilitators keep in touch with schools and review school records. If a youth is doing well in school, he or she must participate in the program as a tutor.

Workshops are educationally based--focusing on issues like African-American history, AIDS, drugs, gangs, and teen parenting.

All of these are fairly traditional activities for a service provider. The empowerment piece comes in because programming is run by tenants. In particular, youth programs are determined by peer leaders, who hold council meetings to determine what activities the youth program should undertake. Geoffrey Bynoe, an OP youth worker who grew up in the development says, "Whatever they want to do comes out of that meeting. Everybody gets job to do. We're in the background, they run the show, they do all the networking...Whatever they want, I do it. I get them jobs, set up whatever they want."

Peer leaders are also trained to do workshops for youth in other public housing projects, at Roxbury Multi-Service Center, and the annual Youth Congress. They have appeared on local television shows like "Frontline" and "People are Talking."

The annual Unity Day is one of the project's most popular events. During Unity Day, residents showcase their performing talents, and people are made aware of the resources and talents of their neighbors.

Project Hope is a house and convent garden run by Little Sisters of the Assumption. They run a shelter for women and children, a follow up program for women who previously lived in the shelter,

and an after school and summer program for boys and girls who live nearby. They also provide a food pantry and have a child care room so that women who are involved in follow up programs (weekly women's group, women's support group, GED) can bring their children with them. Project Hope is also involved in developing affordable housing.

Project Hope's shelter is currently serving eight women and twelve children. The agency's after school programs serve 24 neighborhood youth age 6-12. These programs are two boys' groups and one girls' group--each of which meet 11/2 to 2 hours once a week and offers recreation, field trips, and creative arts. Hour long tutoring sessions are also held twice a week. One adult social worker runs these youth programs

Youth living in the area between Woodford, Magnolia, and Lynnguard--and members of their extended families--are eligible for Project Hope's after school activities. A van is available to pick up and drop off youth.

Nuestra Comunidad runs an after school program for 45 6-12 year olds. This program has been in existence only two years. Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation provides space in a storefront and City Year runs programs. After school activities are considered an adjunct to housing activities, and all participants must be residents in Nuestra Comunidad property. Nuestra also runs a work readiness training program, with 15 youth 14-17 working five days a week from 2:30 to 5:30 doing basic rehabilitation and turnover work on Nuestra apartments.

Nuestra Comunidad has been working with the Cape Verdean Society to reopen the Cape Verdean Community House. However, Nuestra would rather not be providing its own youth programs and offers them only because "nobody else is doing it."

Cape Verdian Society of New England used to run the Cape Verdean Community House and is working to re-open the building. Planned programs are: drug prevention, social club, ESL classes, exercise, and youth/after school activities. The building has an auditorium, gym, and indoor track which are not utilized. This summer, the Cape Verdian Center is planning to work with youth affected by murder in Uphams Corner.

Bird Street Community Center is a drop-in center in Uphams Corner. Established fifteen years ago, Bird Street serves youth 6-21. About 120 youth use the building in the afternoons; 100 youth use the building in the evening. There are three staff working full-time with youth at Bird Street.

Bird Street has a gym and offers discussion groups and general drop-in activities. They require youth to spend an hour working on homework before getting involved in other activities. Last year, Bird Street and DSNI collaborated on a summer program at Mary Hannon Park. This summer, Bird Street will run the program alone.

Bird Street recently initiated a Young Merchants Alliance Project in which 15 teenagers, 14-17, are trained in basic job skills and then placed with Uphams Corner merchants for the summer.

Edwin Diaz is a streetworker based at Bird Street who works one on one helping youth find and keep jobs.

Two-thirds of Bird Street's youth come from around Uphams Corner. One-third comes from the Dudley area.

The **Roxbury Boys and Girls Club** has a large building located in Dudley Square. Their programs are nominally open to children and teenagers of all ages. According to local youth and youth workers, the club is considered a good resource only for people up to twelve years in age. Older youth don't use the agency actively.

Shelburne Recreation is a city-run recreation center with a pool.

Service providers offer safety by providing supervised physical spaces which operate as safe havens during their hours of operation. Adults are present to oversee activities and assure basic security. Alianza Hispana, Lena Park, and Project Hope work with a limited number of youth who join their after school programs and classes. Nuestra Comundidad and Orchard Park only work with youth who live in their projects. Therefore, the people who use these resources are known and familiar to each other. Because of concerns about neighborhood safety, these organizations generally work with very local populations and offer some sort of transportation to and from activities.

Bird Street seems to be the program that has had the heaviest safety issues to deal with. Unlike Alianza, Lena Park, and Project Hope, Bird Street does not provide transportation to its center. As a drop-in center, Bird Street is relatively more transient. The agency has strict rules and regulations. Youth are required to remove and check gang-associated "colors" before entering the building. Youth who don't follow rules can be temporarily or permanently banned from the center. Some youth mention that the rules and regulations at Bird Street give them a feeling of security. Others say that those same rules are limiting and that Bird Street's structure doesn't allow for youth initiative. Still others refuse to use the facility, saying that it is poorly supervised. Two major violent incidents

happened near the center this year, one involving youth who used the center, another involving people who are familiar to youth at the center. While two violent incidents within a year may not seem like that much, youth leaders at other community centers, such as Orchard Park's building, say that they have never had to deal with any safety issues at all. Bird Street is not located in an area that is more associated with violence than Orchard Park. The difference in safety issues appears to be related in part to staffing. Bird Street executive director Mary Gunn says that the center is very understaffed. Although there are fourteen staff people at Bird Street, only three of these staffmembers are full time, and one is a street outreach worker.

When asked about safety issues, Geoffrey Bynoe of Orchard Park says, "We never had a problem with that. They respect us too much." Respect at Orchard Park flows in both directions. A council of youth leaders determines and directs programming at the center, with adult youth workers serving as facilitators. Project Hope also includes youth in decision-making. More often, organizations do not directly consult youth prior to initiating programs but ask for feedback and post-program evaluations. It is difficult to assess respect in adult-youth interactions. Much of this has to do with the personality of individual staff.

However, when youth workers do respect youth and are able to provide enough attention, the personal strengths of youth workers can provide a base for hope. Alianza Hispana, Bird Street, and Orchard Park all have youth workers who have grown up in the neighborhood and have long-term ties to the area. These youth workers have gone through circumstances similar to the youth they work with and are in a position to deal realistically with youth issues while also providing role models. At other agencies, turnover of staff can be a problem. For example, the afterschool staff at Nuestra Comunidad consists of young adults who, as City Year staff, are programmatically committed to spending no more than one year with the agency. This forces youth to make and break attachments to a rotating group of youth workers.

The main programmatic issue affecting service programs is opportunity. The limited range of neighborhood opportunities, specifically the weak local economic base, affects the efficacy of service-based programs which offer work readiness training or GED classes. While the long waiting lists for GED and work readiness programs in Dudley clearly indicate a desire for these kinds of courses, people who complete these courses often end up being frustrated by their options. Because of the weakness of the local economy, youth find that taking individual betterment classes does not necessarily enhance life prospects. Victor Morales talks of youth who complete their GED and find that they have few options other than enrolling in another program. Bob Thornell talks of the frustration of youth who go through the employment training program at Roxbury Youthworks and find that they "are all job ready and there are no jobs."

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Other service groups do not offer enough opportunity in-house. After school day care groups often offer activities which occupy youth's time and keep them off the streets but don't really utilize youth resources or help them with serious life issues. Sports leagues, video games, ping-pong, and pool are all fine things to have in a neighborhood after school program, but they are not enough. The primary weakness of after school programs is that they often don't link their short-term activities to a larger vision of what youth might attain.

Empowerment Groups

Empowerment groups are focused on the larger vision. They emphasize youth decision-making and leadership and are organized to create a supportive community where youth issues can be heard. Programming which develops is initiated by youth.

While programs such as Project Hope and Orchard Park United Tenants have integrated empowerment goals into their service delivery, empowerment groups differ in that empowerment goals precede service delivery aims. Such groups emphasize process and focus on creating individual and community power and control. Newly formed youth groups based at the Puerto Rican Organizing and Resource Center and at DSNI are both empowerment organizations.

Puerto Rican Organizing Resource Center sponsors a youth group called El Sol de Jovenes. El Sol de Jovenes formed this year, following a successful retreat at Groton and the disbanding of Poder Latino, another youth organization which was de-funded a year ago. El Sol de Jovenes has a core permanent membership of 25 youth working with one full time and two part-time adult facilitators. Youth run the office and are learning how to write proposals so that they can continue to fund the group. Current activities are: mural painting, homework sessions, sports, a recycling program, and a women's support group. Working with Bikes not Bombs, the group has been recycling old bikes for their won use and are planning a bike retreat. A GED/ESL program is planned.

However, these specific activities are not as fixed as the group's overall goal--which is self-definition, cultural education, and community power.

Palacios and the youth he works with talk about re defining their role in the community. They want to change the terms of the debate around youth and focus on an educational process within the community, not just a process to help kids get out of the community. They want their specific activities always to be linked to larger educational goals, and they want their education to be concrete and ongoing. Palacios says this is part of a body/mind/spirit/community continuity. He says that youth are a resource not a service population and that they have strengths adults don't always have. In particular, he says that youth are able to cut through boundaries in the neighborhood because they see things in moral not political terms. They deal with issues as morally right or morally wrong.

Jose Palacios describes El Sol's method of working:

> You can't deal with just one issue and not deal with everything that's related--poverty, oppression, racism. (You have to be) holistic and realistic, have an open mind, you can't block out what's going on. (There are adult facilitators working with group but) but they are known. They are adults who have gained respect through a process...We can rely on each other, deal with problems. We have to provide environment to feel safe, to just sit down and talk.

Drop-a-Dime is an intermediary between the police and the community. Drop-a-Dime operates a city-wide anonymous tip line that people can call to report crimes. While Drop-a-Dime is not specifically a youth agency, it operates one program specifically geared to youth. This is the Street Lawyer's Program, designed to teach young men and women what their legal rights and responsibilities are when stopped by the police. Street Lawyers also trains young people to act as legal mentors/teachers in their community and provides basic background and experience which supports those youth who might want to pursue a legal career. The agency also holds rallies and organizes and supports local crime watches.

Youth ages 9-18 are eligible for the program which runs for 12 weeks, with 6 weeks of classroom training concluding with a mock trial, a 3 week internship with prosecutor, and a 3 week internship with defense counsel. 350-400 youth are trained per year.

Safety is obviously a central focus of Drop-a-Dime's programs. The Street Lawyer's Program is unique in that it addresses issues of safety, opportunity, and respect at a neighborhood scale. Both police brutality and street crime issues are potentially addressed. Legal training offers a specific skill and opportunity. Respect is integral because the program defines the rights of youth under arrest and urges youth to spread information about those rights to other young people in their neighborhood. The program also intends to develop a network of young people who act as neighborhood leaders.

At El Sol de Jovenes, safety is both physical and psychological. The storefront that PRORC works out of is secured and the youth in El Sol have spent over a year getting to know each other. Respect for youth resources is the base of the organization. The group deals with youth problems, problems which could lead to hopelessness, but also recognizes that youth are more than their problems and deficits. The group build on its hope and ideas for the future. The process the group has gone through to form itself and acquire funding is educational. Because youth run the office and acquire funding, they are learning the basics of how to keep an organization alive. Youth set the group's

mission, determine programming, and figure out what practical steps they need to take to fund and carry out activities. El Sol's work process is its own opportunity.

While both PRORC and Drop-a-Dime have integrated long-term goals with short-term activities, a criticism which could be levied against empowerment groups is that they are all talk and very little action. Empowerment itself is difficult to measure. Just because a group sets itself up as empowering does not necessarily mean that the individuals who are active with the group will feel that participation in the program makes them feel more powerful and capable.

Another criticism of empowerment groups is that they end up excluding people whose immediate needs preclude their interest in talking about abstract issues. Streetworker Victor Morales says "Centro Puertoriqueno is an empowerment group, okay, but if you're hanging out with your brothers and friends, there is no such thing as empowerment. I need money. (I need to deal with) what's happening at home..."

Streetworkers, crisis intervention workers, and agencies who take a whole needs approach to youth end up being more actively engaged with youth in need.

Street-oriented Programs

Street-oriented approaches involve going to the problem instead of waiting for the problem to come to you. Streetworkers hang out on the streets, develop friendships with youth, and work one on one with teenagers and young adults to help them deal with whatever is happening in their lives.

Victor Morales runs a Wednesday movie night and discussion group at Alianza Hispana. Most of his work is done one-on-one with 17-28 year olds--taking people to court or detox, helping them figure out whether to join a gang or leave one, working with them to find jobs and training, and helping with family and personal problems. His philosophy is oriented towards getting on the level of the person he is working with and dealing with their basic needs and issues. He feels that successful programs have to be able to provide something real--like money or a T pass or training that really leads to a concrete job or long-term affiliation in a group that really cares. He stresses that training programs need to be able to offer monetary supports for the attainment of goals. He says:

> A lot of youth say I'm not going to ask for help. They're being self-destructive, so you have to go out there, expectations that kids will come in . I don't wait for people to come in. I do outreach...A lot of people are not willing to take that step. They just open their doors. I'm not just going to open the door. I'm going to grab you by the neck and pull you in. You give them a hand. You don't wait for them to give you a hand.

Morales also says that effective streetworkers can't be people who wrap up at 5:00 and don't take their issues home with them. He feels that he is effective because he had his own street experiences growing up in Dudley and because he is persistent and unwilling to accept bureaucratic limitations. He says:

> I won't put my kids on any waiting list. I can't deal with that. If I do, the next time they call, they might be calling from jail. I'm persistent about what I want...I spend my own money if I have to...There are a lot of issues out there. Stop shutting people off...Show you care and you're there for them. They respond. Kids change mentally, and it makes them happy.

In streetwork, safety is realized by helping youth make decisions which lead them away from destructive roles. Streetworkers also help people meet immediate needs, providing food and money, if needed, finding housing, and jobs. Streetworkers help people who are making life and death decisions, people who are at risk for dying young. Respect is provided via the personal relationships streetworkers make with youth. Friendship with a streetworker can be crucial for someone breaking away from a group or for someone unable to form other friendships. Hope is offered by contact with someone who has gone through street life and forged a different path. The fact that streetworkers work one-on-one with youth, pushing through bureaucratic roadblocks to fulfill basic needs is also a cause for hope. While streetworkers don't create opportunities, they will work with youth until they can find opportunities. Their great strength is their willingness to deal with people as equals and their refusal to put youth off, to say that an issue falls outside their service jurisdiction or responsibility.

Whole Needs Approach

The whole needs approach is similar to the street-oriented approach in that it usually involves a program or process that addresses the full range of issues that a young person might be going through. Such programs also connect individual needs to community development issues. Programs such as Youthbuild which offer a combined program involving job training and placement, academic training, counseling, decision-making and leadership opportunities, and a chance to be affiliated with a group over the long term is the most fully developed example of this approach.

Youthbuild Boston is a construction training program in which youth who have dropped out of high school develop hands-on skills by converting abandoned buildings into affordable housing for people who are homeless or near homeless. The aim of the program is to deal holistically with all of the issues which constrain youth. The agency is committed to developing itself as a group which

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"bear(s) no resemblance to the institutions and attitudes that have already disappointed and hurt our young people."

Youthbuild Boston is the local chapter of a national organization founded in East Harlem. Youthbuild Boston works with existing organizations in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. The agency has been in Boston for only a few years and is still getting started up. Youthbuild Boston is about to move its main office to a location within the Dudley Triangle.

Youthbuild works with 35 Roxbury and Dorchester youth per cycle. Youth in the program have generally left high school. The group's strength lies in its comprehensive approach and its linking of individual needs to community development concerns. Like streetworkers, Youthbuild staff are anxious not to cut off youth, to tell them that an issue lies beyond programmatic jurisdiction. In fact, even when youth complete the program, they are allowed to come back and utilize the placement and counseling resources of the agency. Several Youthbuild USA construction teams, including the most recently formed Boston team, have made commitments to stay together at the end of the program. Victor Morales says, "That's the thing that's good about Youthbuild. The structure is to isolate the youth, everything you need, you get, and when you leave, they're still there for you."

Safety is stressed by holding youth and staff to high standards of conduct and workmanship. Youthbuild operates according to thirteen principles, one of which is "Protection, as much as possible, from disaster, or at least the support necessary to survive it."[10] Respect comes from youth holding positions of real power and decision-making within the organization and from a focus on the contributions youth can make to a community. The construction skills and job placement are clear opportunities. In fact, despite the building slump, employers are calling Youthbuild Boston for trainees, and YBB has received more requests for employees than it can currently fill. The support of a group that is willing to stick by the construction trainee during and after the Youthbuild program provides a base for hope.

Crisis-oriented Programs

Crisis-oriented programs intervene after an emergency, such as an arrest or an abusive family incident, has happened. Often, involvement in crisis-oriented programs is mandatory. These programs are

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[10] Jonathan Calvert and Dorothy Stoneman (eds.) Youthbuild: A Manual for the Implementation of the Housing Related Enhanced Work Experience Program, Fifth Draft, (New York: Coalition for Twenty Million Dollars, January 1990), p. 10.

oriented to helping families and individuals in crisis get through immediate difficulties and eventually readjust to community life.

Roxbury Youthworks works with three populations--youth who have just been arrested, youth coming out of a Department of Youth Services lockup, and youth considered to be at high risk for criminal involvement. Youthworks runs three programs: a Juvenile Court Clinic located in the Roxbury District Courthouse, an employment and training service for Roxbury and Dorchester youth, and an outreach and tracking program for people who have been incarcerated in a Department of Youth Services facility. Youthworks serves youth up to the age of 18. Most youth in the preventative programs are 12-15 year olds.

Juvenile Court Clinic's intake is open-ended. Juvenile Court Clinic does psychological assessment, counseling, and referral and placement of at-risk youth in education, employment, and treatment programs. Most of the people who come through the clinic receive only initial screening and assessment. Others receive referrals and counseling. Individual counseling through Juvenile Court lasts 3-6 months or through the terms of probation. Men's and women's psycho-educational groups have been recently instituted. These groups, which consist of 8-10 youth and a Youthworks counselor, meet for ten week cycles.

Outreach and tracking has two counselors who work with 12 youth at a time--usually for four to six months. Counselors are responsible for helping youth readjust to community life. Counselors met three times a week with each youth, put them in touch with as many local resources as possible, and are responsible for daily contact and curfew enforcement. Counselors meet with youth at home and take groups of men and women to the Justice Resource Institute once a week for recreations, workshops. and activities.

Employment and training has a small in-house work crew who work intensively for two months at a time, learning job and work readiness skills. Placement is also offered in entry level jobs in the public and private sector.

Because Youthworks is a crisis intervention agency rather than a long-term service provider, much of its success depends on its abilities to create ties between its youth and other local groups which are able to deal with people who have been criminally involved. Youthworks has close ties to Gangpeace, Father's Incorporated, Just-a-Start in Cambridge, the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Treatment Works, and local health clinics, such as Dimock Street. Youthworks also work with the violence prevention project at Boston City Hospital and with George Kinney of the AIDS Action Committee. More than other groups, Youthworks strength depends upon its ability to find strong opportunities in the community and its capacity to assure that its youth make meaningful contact with these resources.

Youthworks considers its Warren Street offices to be a safe haven for local youth.[11] By working intensively with families who are undergoing a crisis such as an arrest, Youthworks both responds to violence issues and also hopes to prevent the escalation of conflict. Through close contact with youth following their release from secured facilities or halfway homes, Youthworks aims to reach youth at a time when they might be amenable to rethinking their choices. Hope, opportunity, and respect are byproducts of the personal relationship between counselor and youth. Ideally, they are also outgrowths of the relationships counselors are able to forge between youth and other agencies.

Summary:

All youth resources try to provide safety, hope, opportunity, and respect. Safety is often physically rooted in a place that feels comfortable and neutral. The presence of other youth and adults who are willing to make a long-term commitment helps with the feeling of psychological safety, the willingness to speak freely. Respect is dependent upon interpersonal relationships. It involves being treated like an important and special person. It is reinforced when youth are allowed to make decisions regarding the agency's activities. Opportunity exists to greater or lesser degree at every agency and is part of what draws youth to the center. Hope grows when opportunities are able to support a larger vision of what youth and their community might be.

While all youth agencies use different techniques to provide these basic entities in-house, only empowerment and whole needs groups are specifically oriented towards building these qualities in the neighborhood. This is a problem because the same factors which hurt youth end up restricting agencies which serve youth. All agencies are stymied by the lack of safety, hope, opportunity, and respect, all are limited by what the larger environment fails to provide.

Obstacles:

Funding and communication problems exacerbate this situation, further impeding agencies from carrying out their missions. Local agencies are funded primarily by foundation grants and social service contracts with the city. As might be expected, agencies which are more service-oriented tend to be more reliant on social service contracts with the city. Alianza Hispana has contracts with the Department of Social Services, Department of Public Welfare, Department of Economic Development, and EDIC. The Orchard Park Tenants Task Force gets its money from the Boston Housing Authority and Boston Community Schools. Nuestra Comunidad has contracts with Safe Neighborhoods, Mass

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[11] Interview with Bob Thistle, June 4, 1992.

Housing Finance Association, foundations, some charge fees. City Year handles staff and programmatic expenses. Roxbury Youthworks is funded by United Way and private foundations. PRORC is funded by Teens as Community Resources and Hyams Foundation. The Office of Substance Abuse also funds youth programming.

All agencies say that they are underfunded, and all say that they have had to drastically alter their programming. In response to cutbacks, programs have been cut, staff has been laid off, and youth have been turned away. Lena Park's staff has dropped from 10 to 4 in the last 4 years. While they used to serve 200 youth, they now work with about 100. Willie James talks about Lena Park staff having to say "You can't come in, nobody's here, we don't have enough staff to cover..." Bird Street executive director Mary Gunn says that staffing is their major problem, that she needs two times as many staff members as she has. Alianza Hispana has dropped it sports program. It has cut its counseling program by 65% , going from 2 full-time counselors to one part-time counselor. Alianza's afterschool program has been cut by 30%.[12] They are currently licensed to serve 43 children but they only serve 24 kids.[13] Even though they have space and a waiting list, they do not have enough funding or staff to offer service up to their physical capacity. Roxbury Youthworks' Juvenile Court Clinic has lost 1/3 of its 9-person staff and is now focused on just screening the youth it sees. Much of the counseling and referral work it is set up to do has to be left undone, because of the limited staff and the lack of referral resources.[14] Each psychologist at the Juvenile Court Clinic has a caseload in the eighties. The streetworker program at Youthworks, which used to have a staff of four outreach workers, has been cut. While Orchard Park's funding and programming has been extending, Geoffrey Bynoe notes that he is given $1,000 a year to cover programmatic expenses for 500 people.

Agencies also feel that they are chasing money, responding to what they can get money for, and that there is an issue of mismatch between the way funds are structured and what people really want and need. There are two problems mentioned most often. First, funds are oriented towards service provision and to short-term interventions or classes. Second, the need to meet the requirements of funding sometimes works against responsiveness in programming. Community organizing and resource development work and efforts which deal with the interconnectedness of issues are not consistently supported. According to Carlos Cruz, director of youth programs at Alianza Hispana,

> Community organizations are not really doing their job, their whole approach is that of a
> service provider, responding to where money is...The desire is there (to do community

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[12] Interview with Carlos Cruz, May 6, 1992.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992.

organizing) but funding to community based organizations is geared to more professional services rather than community organizing.[15]

To Cruz, the need to chase money works against the need to have user-responsive programming.. He says that organizations say that they ask the people in the neighborhood what they think and want , but that most organizations, with the possible exception of DSNI, never really do this. He says, "If you want to know what people think, ask the people....(but) the ask the people criterion doesn't get played out because we would have to negotiate as equals"

The issue of negotiating as equals implies that there are power relations in service provision, relations which mirror larger societal structures. Bill Batson of Teens as Community Resources quotes John McKnight, an organizer who believes that the more served a neighborhood is, the more powerless it is.[16] Others, using a political economy perspective , don't draw such a 1:1 relationship but note that there are inherent risks in taking advantage of services, particularly the loss of power. All institutions are imbedded in a social context. When that context is one of substantial inequality, it is hard to disengage. Richard English, dean of the School of Social Work at Howard University writes:

> When individuals seek out human service organizations and become their clients, students, patients, prisoners, and so they invariably become dependent on them and the organizations acquire control over their lives. Moreover, organizational elites and officials control the resources these client groups need, as well as the policies that govern the services. The individual's loss of power in transactions is a fundamental aspect of human service organizations...[17]

Loss of power is expressed in a variety of ways and does not imply that service providers are not dedicated and well meaning. However, professional/philanthropic culture has its own needs--needs which can conflict with the goal of programmatic responsiveness. For example, funding structures and professional culture tend to break things down--into specific issues, into blocks of time. Despite this general tendency for work to be broken up into discrete cycles, issues, and organizational mandates, youth benefit most when the interconnection of concerns is addressed and when adults are willing to make long-term ongoing commitments to youth well-being. Youth services which work the best, and which are the most culturally appropriate in Latino and African-American communities,

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[15] Interview with Carlos Cruz, May 6, 1992. (All subsequent reamrks attributed to Carlos Cruz are from this interview).

[16] Interview with Bill Batson, May 18, 1992.

[17] Richard A. English, "Diversity of World Views Among African American Families," in Chipungu, Sandra, Everett, Joyce, and Leashore, Bogart (eds.), Child Welfare: An Africentric Perspective, (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 1991), p. 28.

emphasize connectedness.[18] This has been reported in the human services literature in books such as _Within Our Reach_ by Lisbeth Schorr and _Child Welfare: An Africentric Approach_ by Everett, Chipungu, and Leashore.[19] Local experience bears out these academic claims.

At Roxbury Youthworks, counselor/advocates find that just as people are beginning to open up in group counseling sessions, they are cycled out.[20] In the last several sessions of Youthworks' counseling programs, even though the young adults in the counseling program felt good about the program and asked if they could continue, they were denied due to lack of funding. Obviously, agencies need to work in cycles if they are to reach the greatest number of people with a limited budget. But, youth workers find that cutting people off ends up working against what youth need most--a long-term affiliation with a supportive group.

Affiliation and contact is needed not only within programs but also between agencies. Activists in Dudley say that funding patterns work against organizations coming together. Agencies say they are also pushed apart by the need to compete for limited funding. According to Liz Pollard-Howland of Project Hope, "There are so many resources but we're not working collaboratively... desire not to give up successes, competing for funds. Funding is not focused on collaboration; creative collaboration isn't necessarily funded." Sister Sue Beaton of Project Hope feels that agencies are reluctant to share information about their services because of the competition for foundation funding. It should be noted, however, that funding patterns are not the only thing which keeps groups apart. There are old hurts and political disagreements which keep some social service agencies from working together and which keep some people from feeling comfortable at particular agencies. Lena Park's community house is just next door to a community center run by the Orchard Park United Tenants Association, but the two organizations won't work together. In fact, despite its location, Lena Park serves no Orchard Park children. The United Tenants believe that Lena Park uses OP statistics to get service money but that it never serves the Orchard Park community, refusing to do outreach in the projects or to translate its material into Spanish. There are also conflicts between Alianza Hispana and DSNI.

Despite these obstacles, several groups do work on collaborative efforts. Dorchester Youth Council-Alateen uses the Bird Street Community Center. Bird Street and DSNI collaborated on the Mary

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[18] Roberta Turner,"Affirming Consciousness: The Africentric Perspective," in Chipungu, Sandra, Everett, Joyce, and Leashore, Bogart (eds.), _Child Welfare: An Africentric Perspective_, (New Brunswick, NJ : Rutgers University Press, 1991), p. 46; and Ruth Kochler, _Culturally Responsive Architecture: a Community Center and Housing for Latinos in Roxbury_, Unpublished thesis, Master of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989. (These resources discuss the importance of phsyical and spiritual interconnection in African-American and Latino culture).

[19] Lisbeth Schorr and Daniel Schorr, _Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage_, (New York, NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1988), pp.256-7.

[20] Interview with Bob Thornell, May 6, 1992.

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Hannon festival last summer. Alianza and Bird Street and the Dorchester Youth Collaborative work together on basketball leagues. Project Hope, St. Patrick's and DSNI work closely together. Alianza, Nuestra Comunidad, Casa Esperanza and PRORC collaborate. The older social service agencies, including Lena Park and the Roxbury Multi-Service Center, have formed a coalition of African-American social service agencies which intend to work on joint fund-raising efforts.

Summary:

A variety of environmental factors constrain the ability of Dudley-area non-profits to carry out their mission. Agency heads say they do not have enough financial resources to provide adequate opportunities to neighborhood youth. A major issue related to financing is the inability to hire enough adult staff to develop and run activities. A lack of money for program-related expenses is also an issue.

Even if more funds were available, the structure of human service funding presents its own obstacles. Current funding sources are more geared to short-term interventions and classes and to the delivery of verifiable services. Money is available in short-term cycles tied to foundation or city budget demands. Therefore, programming is offered which reflects these funding cycles.

In human services, the consumers of services and the people who pay for the production of services are not the same. Agencies are thus in the difficult position of responding to two distinct constituent groups: funders and clients. Funders are obviously the more powerful constituency, since non-profit agencies depend upon their financial support. Community based organizations have split allegiances. They must balance their mandate to respond to the local community with their need to meet the requirements of the funding community.

Non-programmatic resources

Like any neighborhood, however, the Dudley Triangle has its own resources. One of DSNI's main functions is identifying these resources and directing them back into the community. While DSNI continues to look to outside funders to support its mission, the agency's ultimate aim is to build a community which can draw upon its own resources--both financial and personal--to meet its own needs. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyze the potential economic base of Dudley. However, money is not the only resource which builds a neighborhood.

Family networks are one of the Dudley Triangle area's greatest strengths. Often, families in the neighborhood are extended with cousins, aunts, uncles and grandmothers living nearby. The

proximity of relatives and near relatives provides a potentially elaborate support system for families. Almost everybody who works with youth in the Dudley Triangle says that children who get essential supports at home are better able to get through obstacles the outside world puts in their way. Geoffrey Bynoe says if a family is dealing with issues, kids are generally going to be okay. Bob Thornell feels that the system works for children who have essential supports. Mary Gunn distinguishes between children who get good support and children whose families can't, for whatever reason, rally behind them. Victor Morales says he doesn't need to work with "mommy's kids," people who already have a parent behind them.

Extended families also provide a powerful base for community organizing. Local agencies which are able to hook into this family network have an inherent stability and power. Orchard Park United Tenants Association builds on the organizational strength of existing families. So does DSNI. Gertrudes Fidalgo, one of the community organizers for the agency, began her "organizing" career by taking her 40-odd nieces and nephews around town, planning ways to keep them busy.

Thirty percent of the African-American families in the neighborhood are homeowners. The Cape Verdean community is highly organized and has a long tradition of mutual self-help. Although the Latino community is the poorest and most transient group in the Triangle, Latino youth workers such as Jose Palacios also consider their community to be "tight" and supportive. Others in the Latino community note difficulties but say they are inspired by "people going through stuff and being willing to come back, people who really are out there helping people, potential of friendship groups to help people with stuff they can't get help with in family." There are neighborhood associations, crime watches, and tenant groups on many blocks, creating a neighborhood-wide communication network. People working along Dudley Street hang out and know each other. Local businesses are committed to the community and to its youth. For example, Jet-a-Way, the local dry cleaning store, provides 100 camp scholarships each summer. Geoffrey Bynoe works with Dudley Street store owners to place Orchard Park teenagers in summer jobs in local stores.

Physically, the neighborhood is beautiful with lovely houses, churches, and trees. The overall density in the area is low. At the most recent DSNI community meeting, people gathered in small groups to develop lists of the economic assets of neighborhood. They listed physical assets such as the "existing businesses that can be strengthened", fish companies, family day care providers, Dimock street training centers, health centers, hospitals, schools, fast food restaurants, small food stores, caterers, hair dressers, cable vision, the Strand theater, vacant land and the MBTA. They also listed social resources such as "motivated ambitious people", "family unity," "our diversity," and "untapped energy."

Summary:

Agencies and programs are not the only resources in the neighborhood, nor are they the only means of support for young people. In fact, the proportionally low number of youth involved in non-profit programs indicates that most youth are getting their support from other sources, such as friends and family. However, non-profit organizations are often crucial for youth without familial supports.
Just as youth are strengthened by contact with a strong family, many of the most powerful agencies in the neighborhood are hooked into extended family networks. The neighborhood's current strengths, its existing physical and social resource base, should not be ignored when developing new initiatives.

CHAPTER THREE: Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

Introduction

DSNI's goal is to work in a way that counters divisive, disempowering trends. They aim to bring together all the different factions, ages, and ethnicities in the neighborhood, to make decisions based upon a grassroots process, and to rewrite the terms of standard power relations. They see their mission as a combination of physical development, human development and community organizing. They do not view themselves as service providers but as a coalition of neighborhood residents, workers, and human service professionals who are working to enhance existing Dudley resources and to create new opportunities.

This task involves youth in several ways. Recognizing that youth agencies face difficulties with financing and inter-communication, DSNI wants to change the environment in which youth services operate. Having talked with youth who say that existing services don't meet their needs, DSNI seeks to develop new youth services. Understanding that people under 18 constitute at least half of the Dudley neighborhood, DSNI is working to include youth in the planning process.

Because DSNI is neighborhood-oriented rather than agency-focused, it is ideally suited to address youth safety, hope, opportunity, and respect as community development responsibilities rather than service delivery issues. The agency's empowerment ideology, along with its conviction that community organizing must affirm neighborhood strengths, enables DSNI to see youth as assets, as people with untapped resources as well as unsolved problems.

Organizational Structure

Organizationally, DSNI is distinct from other community agencies in the area. Neighborhood associations, tenant organizations, crime watches, and the DSNI general membership have decision-making authority over the agency's actions. The staff's role is to facilitate decision-making by doing research, gathering information, and coordinating the activities of the general membership.[1] The board is authorized to take action based on neighborhood decisions.

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[1] Interview with Rogelio Whittington, May 27, 1992.

DSNI does not intend to offer direct services or to remain as a permanent entity. The group intends to work itself out of business over time as resident-based institutions and initiatives develop and become self-sustaining.[2]

DSNI Activities

DSNI's overall accomplishments to date give some sense of how the agency has translated its ideological goals into specific activities. DSNI's work is divided into three categories: physical planning, human development, and community organizing.

DSNI's physical development plan is complete. The overall physical plan for the neighborhood includes new housing units, landscaping and tree planting throughout the neighborhood, economic development along Dudley Street and Blue Hill Avenue, and the construction of two new community centers. The physical plan for the community was developed with 100 community residents and adopted by the City of Boston as an official planning document. Funding commitments for the first phase of work--new housing construction--has been secured. This spring, DSNI broke ground on the first of these new housing units.

DSNI's human development committee has developed a draft master plan for the neighborhood, formed youth and adult focus groups to talk about the proposed community centers, and held neighborhood meetings, cultural festivals, and a summer camp The committee developed and implemented a participatory design process with neighborhood youth. Azi Teklamarian, a former DSNI staff member, pulled together an Interagency Coalition of human service providers, who are organized to influence the human service funding strategies of City policy makers and foundation officials. The Child Care Committee, a subset of the human development committee published the *"It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" Child Care Directory*. This directory contains information about all the local family day care providers and day care centers in the Roxbury/Dorchester area.

The agency's initial organizing period was oriented toward removing health hazards in the neighborhood and attracting neighborhood support. Trash transfer sites were closed down, lots cleared, and an organizational base formed. The agency was able to secure basic political commitments from the city and was able to locate funding sources that were willing to fund process-oriented goals. The agency's current organizing campaign is called PRIDE (People and Resources investing in Dudley's Environment). This campaign consists of: neighborhood greening, organizing around economic development issues, permitting of stores, and neighborhood clean ups. Attention has also been directed towards issues of government responsibility and community policing. DSNI'sstaff and resident base agree that DSNI's greatest strength is organizing. The agency has been

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[2] Interview with Paul Yelder, May 26, 1992.

most successful working on blocks which already have some sort of organizational base.[3] DSNI has been least successful in reaching the Latino population, which is the poorest and most transient group i the neighborhood.[4]

In its first eight years in existence, DSNI has amassed political power, financial resources, and residential support. It has eminent domain authority over vacant parcels in its core area and sympathetic funders who are willing to support the agency's process-oriented objectives. In her 1989 thesis Commercial Development in the Dudley Triangle: Balancing Interests in a Community-Based Plan, Lynn Robinson wrote " A major finding in this analysis is that the reason for doing commercial development in the Dudley Triangle, and the city's involvement emanate from political pressure rather than a perceived need for it ."[5] She writes that the PFD is not convinced that there is a commercial market in Dudley, that they have focused on surrounding commercial districts and are concerned about targeting their resources to have the greatest impact.[6] All these considerations make the PFD less interested in the Dudley Triangle than in other Roxbury neighborhoods where they have already invested resources.[7]

The fact that the PFD officially supported the Dudley plan even though it had financial misgivings points to the political clout of DSNI at the time that these commitments were made. Political clout of course changes over time. DSNI's strength in the late eighties can be attributed to a variety of sources. Citizen organizing in Dudley provided a base of strength in the neighborhood. A fortuitous coming together of other political circumstances bolstered Dudley's position. DSNI was organizing for local control of the land around the same time that the Greater Roxbury Neighborhood Authority was organizing around issues of land control.[8] In the early eighties, a variety of factors helped to politicize the neighborhood.[9] According to DSNI organizer Ros Everdall, Mel King's mayoral race in 1983, Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign in 1984, and the redistricting of 1985-6 (which separated the Dudley neighborhood from the South Boston ward) politicized the neighborhood and gave people hope that political representatives might be responsive to people's real issues.[10]

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[3] Interview with Ros Everdall, May 29, 1992.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Lynn Reynolds, Commercial Development in the Dudley Triangle: Balancing Interests in a Community-Based Plan, Unpublished thesis, Department of Urban and Environmental Policy, Tufts University, May 1989, p. xi.

[6] Ibid., p. xii.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Conversation with Jose Alicea, May 20, 1992.

[9] Interview with Ros Everdall, May 29, 1992.

[10] Ibid.

The election of Nelson Merced, previously executive director of Alianza Hispana, as the first Latino state representative in Massachusetts, further bolstered the neighborhood's political base.[11] Not everyone living and working in the neighborhood feels this power, however. Despite Merced's election, community members who seem to be most questioning of Dudley's political power seem to be the Latino residents of Dudley. In conversations, Melvyn Colon, Evelyn Friedman-Vargas, Jose Alicea, and Carlos Cruz and all point to the weakness of the Dudley neighborhood as a political entity within the City. This sense of political powerlessness may be a reflection or a cause of DSNI's difficulty in organizing the Latino community. Latinos are the poorest group within Dudley and often the most transient. Some are excluded from political activism because they are illegal aliens. Others are less focused on the Dudley neighborhood because they envision themselves staying in the area for a few years and then returning to their homeland.[12] The Latino community is also fairly diverse, representing people born in Boston as well as those who have emigrated from a variety of Central and South American countries.[13]

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Interview with Carlos Cruz, May 6, 1992.

[13] Ibid.

DSNI and Dudley-area Youth

DSNI's youth plans are less fully developed than its overall physical planning and organizing strategies. DSNI's involvement with youth began informally. Youth were always active in neighborhood clean-ups and campaigns to close trash transfer stations. In between these neighborhood events, many children visited the staff in the DSNI office, bringing their report cards and examples of work that they were doing at school. Children, mostly between 6 and 12, visited the office. They began calling or dropping by to see if they could do any work and ended up hanging out waiting for an opportunity to do photocopying or prepare mailings. In response to these visits, Andrea Nagel began taking children to the library, getting them library cards, and encouraging them to write about their ideas. Letters, pictures, and drawings from neighborhood youth are posted throughout DSNI's office. Because most of the children who were hanging out at DSNI were boys, Gus Newport, executive director of DSNI, initiated a series of weekly talks with boys, which were held in DSNI's back room. Children seem to be drawn to DSNI because it is visible and accessible and because the staff encourage youth and allow them to be involved in adult work. Older youth feel that the staff cares and is willing to adapt itself to support youth ideas.

Mary Hannon Summer Program

Formalized youth programs were an outgrowth of these informal talks. Youth told Gus Newport, Andrea Nagel, and Gertrudes Fidalgo that there was no place to play. When Gertrudes mentioned Mary Hannon Park, a large park with a basketball court and play equipment, the children told her she was crazy, the park was dangerous, and they weren't allowed to play there. In response, DSNI decided to reclaim the park by scheduling a summer camp and series of cultural festivals throughout the summer. Two hundred people ended up attending the camp which was divided into a morning session with activities for 7-12 year olds and afternoon session with sports leagues for 13-20 year olds.

Some criticized DSNI for sponsoring last year's summer program, saying that the organization had crossed the boundary from planner/organizer to service provider.[14] Indeed, the summer camp's activities were very similar to the kinds of programs offered by local service providers. The camp sponsored trips, swimming at the Mason Pool, and games at the park during the morning session. There were boys' basketball leagues and girls volleyball in the afternoon. Bird Street collaborated on the programs, ABCD paid the counselors, and the Roxbury Boys and Girls Club donated a van.

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[14] Conversation with Jose Alicea, May 20, 1992.

DSNI felt its activities at Mary Hannon were not overstepping appropriate bounds for an organizing and planning agency. Summer program organizers felt that they were illustrating the need for effective summer programs and taking control over a piece of land. Both of these objectives fell well within DSNI's mandate to "Take a Stand on the Land" and to advocate for improved services for youth. The camp was meant as a call to action for human service providers. According to Gertrudes Fidalgo, the camp was meant to say, " Here are 200 kids with nothing to do. You're saying you're providing services, where are you?" This summer the Bird Street Center will run the Mary Hannon Park program initiated by DSNI.

By programming summer camp activities and cultural festivals in the park, the neighborhood regained Mary Hannon Park. The drug dealers who had previously controlled the park were displaced, although they did not move far away. Many of the people who used to deal drugs at Mary Hannon Park now hang out a block away, behind the Cottage Brook apartments, on Leyland Street. Still, the reclaiming of Mary Hannon Park was considered a substantial neighborhood victory. Now, even in the fall and winter, when local agencies haven't programmed specific activities, kids are out in the park, using the basketball court and playing on the play equipment.

Nubian Youth Group

In fact, the camp ended up serving DSNI's goals in an unanticipated way. It became a base that older youth used for further organizing. The camp counselors, all of whom were local youth in their mid to late teens, met once a week at DSNI's offices to evaluate their work and discuss how they could improve their efforts.   When summer ended, the counselors decided to stay together and form a group which would deal with each other's issues and serve as mentors to other youth in community. They wanted to tutor younger residents and offer peer counseling. They wanted to provide young "wannabe's", children and young teenagers who looked up to gang members, with another kind of group to admire. The counselors formed a DSNI youth group, eventually named the Nubian Youth Group. Gertrudes Fidalgo, DSNI's community organizer, and John Barros, a 17 year old member of DSNI's board, served as facilitators. The group is made up of young adults in their last years of high school or first years of college. Several attend schools outside of the community. Members of the youth groups talk about becoming the leaders of the community.[15] Gertrudes Fidalgo says they " want to show kids from this community...whatever they want out of life is possible...There are positive things that they can do other than hanging out"

The group's first activity was a party with the Bird Street Center. The party didn't work out that well. The older youth had envisioned "throwing out some positive messages" but found that, once

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[15] Interview with Gertrudes Fidalgo, May 8, 1992.

organized, the party ended up being " a bunch of kids in a room without supervision, kids just yelling."[16] In lines with their educational mission, the Nubian Youth Group began making plans for tutoring youth at the Dearborn School. When they presented their ideas to the principal of Dearborn, he turned them away. John Barros said the principal of Dearborn "didn't want them to tutor. Principal said, kids won't come. It's a waste of time. They (people such as the principal) lose hope. They say We've tried it before. It won't work."

After their rejection at Dearborn, the Nubian Youth Group decided to redirect its energies. They decided to focus on getting to know each other and helping each other deal with issues such as racism in the high schools. They also decided to develop a newsletter and to meet with people from as many other local youth empowerment groups as possible. Their first meeting was with the Orchard Park Teen Troupers. The youth at Orchard Park and DSNI decided to collaborate on a summer unity rally, titled "How to Have Fun Without a Gun" The rally, to be held this summer, will have music, sports, speakers, and information tables.

DSNI's support for the Nubian Youth Group comes in a variety of forms but youth are wholly responsible for setting the group's agenda. Gertrudes Fidalgo is the adult facilitator for the group. She says " Our goal is their goals-whatever-support is there for them. They have our time/office space/interest." The Nubian Youth use the office for weekly meetings and use DSNI computers and equipment. Gertrudes Fidalgo says she is present to help youth determine what resources they need to achieve their goals. DSNI will either put the resources in place or work with youth to figure out how to get resources. However, the main function of the DSNI staff in relation to neighborhood youth is having an open ear. According to Gertrudes Fidalgo, "Mostly we sit and listen."

Community Center Planning and Young Architect and Planners

The development of some sort of community center has been part of DSNI's general plan agenda since the publication in 1987 of the DAC International report.. The DAC International report/master plan provided preliminary ideas about child care, recreation, and job training. DSNI followed up the DAC report with a neighborhood needs assessment. Needs were ascertained through adult and youth focus groups and a survey of human service providers.

The Young Architects and Planners Project grew out of the youth focus groups. Coordinated by local architect Gail Sullivan and Human Development Director Andrea Nagel, the project organized three groups of youth 8-12, 13-15, and 16-18 to design youth centers on two sites: Moreland Street and East Cottage Street. Youth models and drawings were presented publicly and described in a booklet

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[16] Interview with John Barros, May 21, 1992.

published by DSNI: Youthful Visions, These visions are understood to be the basis of the final professional drawings for the building.

The three groups of young architects each met on a different evening in the basement of the Defenders of the Faith Church. The architectural process included the development of a program and full design. Forty three neighborhood youth and ten volunteer architect/ planners worked on the project.* DSNI's Youth Visions booklet describes four stages of the programming process: "different cultures/different ages" ; "site, size, and the neighborhood", "bodies to buildings", and "observational field trip."

In the first phase, youth talked with family members and neighbors to ask what they might like in a community centers. These ideas were communicated in preliminary collages which showed both the activities and the qualities people wanted in a community center. In the second phase, youth went to the proposed plots with bamboo poles and staked out the possible entries and room sizes. Next, older youth learned how to use scale measures and younger youth outlined their own bodies on paper and learned about the relationship between the physical size of people and the size of spaces in buildings. Finally, youth visited the community center at MIT to get an idea of what kinds of things might go into a community center. From these activities, the youth of each group developed a wish list of programs, and activities in an ideal youth center. Gail Sullivan, project facilitator, developed a program with square footages for each desired use.

Using this program, the architect/planners began designing. Initially, all groups used the same design process. They cut out colored paper representing different sizes and uses and were asked to experiment putting the colored paper on a drawing of the site. Each architect/planner was asked to develop a colored paper collage on site which represented their vision of desirable relationships between rooms. From these, the architect/planners were supposed to develop preliminary floor plans. From these, the groups were supposed to pick the ideas they liked the most and integrate them into a group plan. Then, the group was supposed to work together to build models.

As the project developed, facilitators realized that this process, which asked neighborhood youth to do what are essentially college-level architectural design exercises, was appropriate only to the oldest group of architect/planners. The youngest group couldn't understand the abstraction of plans. The middle group found activities such as cutting colored paper couldn't sustain their interest. The importance of developing an age appropriate process for planning and empowerment was highlighted by the experience in the youngest group. The youngest group of architect planners, age 10-12, worked on color paper exercises and preliminary plans and sketches, but it soon became clear that these exercises were too difficult for this age group. Staff and volunteers decided to buy a range of model making materials and ask youth to build their favorite room. Some of the materials, such as

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* I was one of the volunteer facilitators for the youngest group.

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foam core and popsicle sticks, were fairly abstract. Others, such as green pom poms, bells, and dried moss were fairly suggestive. When the 10-12 year old planners abandoned the relatively structured design process and were given the freedom to build models with these materials, they were able to express what they really wanted in a building. They exhibited a sophisticated sense of space and design and had all sorts of ideas about the details of the building. These ranged from Joel Sanchez and Tomeka White's design for a daycare center with many interior levels, an elevated outdoor play space, bells, and a peaked roof to Giovanni Hernandez's design of an entry which had an overhang to protect kids from rain, leading to a grand hallway lined by flowers on either side and covered with glass.None of these ideas came out of the formal process. Kids this age couldn't understand plans, and when they produced drawings, they envisioned much simpler and more symbolic spaces than they were able to produce when they built models. Drawn spaces tended to be square symmetrical rooms with a door and two windows. Built spaces had indoor/outdoor spaces, multiple levels, and specific details.

Future plans

While DSNI's plans for youth are focused on the development of new community centers, several other plans may strongly impact on youth. DSNI is beginning its economic development planning. The agency plans to inventory skills in the neighborhood and prepare a skills bank. Staff, board, and residents want to encourage small business development, retail micro-enterprises, and job training. They want to solidify contacts with existing employers. Residents have begun meeting to consider existing economic assets which could form a base for future commercial development.

According to Deputy Director Paul Yelder , youth issues and the proposed community center will be the focus of DSNI's upcoming efforts.[17] To this end, school issues, service provider accountability, and the development of the new community centers have been discussed as possible emphases for DSNI over the next five years. The human development committee has just finished writing a draft master plan for the neighborhood. This plan outlines the major human development activities for the agency. Possible plans for the upcoming year include a child care project, a parents group, an intergenerational film/video project, a community scholarship program and a community review and assessment process. In addition, a major objective of the human development committee is strengthening the Interagency Collaborative. This group was brought together to lobby foundations and the City for changes in funding procedure. Andrea Nagel says the Collaborative's task is to

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[17] Interview with Paul Yelder, May 26, 1992.

"Educate them (the funders) as to why things are not working. We can't continue going down path not getting anywhere. Foundations need to get on board." [18]

The draft human development plan, prepared this year, talks about children's interest as central to DSNI's mission and predicts, over the next five to ten years, neighborhood youth will derive hope from the recreational facilities, educational and employment opportunities that Dudley area residents will be able to put together. As DSNI turns to focus on youth and as it begins moving into the implementation stage of its work, the issue of translating DSNI goals into new forms becomes crucial.

Summary:

DSNI has included youth in its general physical development, human development, and community organizing activities and developed scattered youth initiatives. Over the next five years, youth issues will become even more central as the agency develops and implements its human development plan and begins final design and construction of the community centers. DSNI has identified three areas of responsibility for itself: involvement of youth in planning activities, removal of obstacles which restrict effective functioning of human services, and development of new youth initiatives.

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[18] Interview with Andrea Nagel, May 26, 1992.

CHAPTER FOUR:
Youth Center Design

Introduction

When the Dudley neighbors build a community center, one of their tasks will be developing a physical design which supports the social goals of DSNI . This chapter looks at the physical infrastructure of the Dudley neighborhood and presents a schematic design for a proposed community center. The community center must support various levels of interaction and decision-making. It must be a building which can be built by a combination of professionals and construction trainees, and one which can be used comfortably by a diverse community for a range of recreational, social, cultural, and educational activities. The best community building would draw upon, strengthen and integrate the physical assets of the neighborhood in much the same way that DSNI's organizing and human development planning seek to strengthen the social structure of the community.

Neighborhood Analysis

The Dudley Triangle neighborhood includes the Orchard Park housing development, along with the triangular area which extends from the intersection of Blue Hill Avenue and Dudley Street down these streets to Columbia Road. The boundary circumscribing the neighborhood is a political one, drawn by DSNI to describe their target neighborhood. Dudley Square lies to the north of the triangle, Grove Hall to the west and Uphams Corner to the south. The old commuter rail lines and the Mass Turnpike are to the east.

Blue Hill Avenue and Dudley Street have historically served as the primary retail corridors for Dorchester and Roxbury. Main bus routes travel down these streets and many of the area's available commercial resources are grouped here. This thesis focuses specifically upon Dudley Street.

There are many different uses along Dudley Street: one story retail establishments, brick tenements and row houses, wood two-families and triple-deckers, vacant lots, and industrial buildings--some abandoned, some occupied. Many of the major institutional uses in the area are located along Dudley Street. Alianza Hispana and St. Patrick's Church and Rectory are located on the corner of Blue Hill and Dudley. The Mason School is several blocks away. However, several other institutional buildings are located away from Dudley Street in more residential areas. These include two nunneries, a Catholic School, St. Paul's church, and a local community health center.

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Alianza Hispana and St. Patrick's Church at the intersection of Dudley Street and Blue Hill Avenue

St. Patrick's Church and rectory; former orphanage site. This lot was the original thesis site. Ⓑ

73
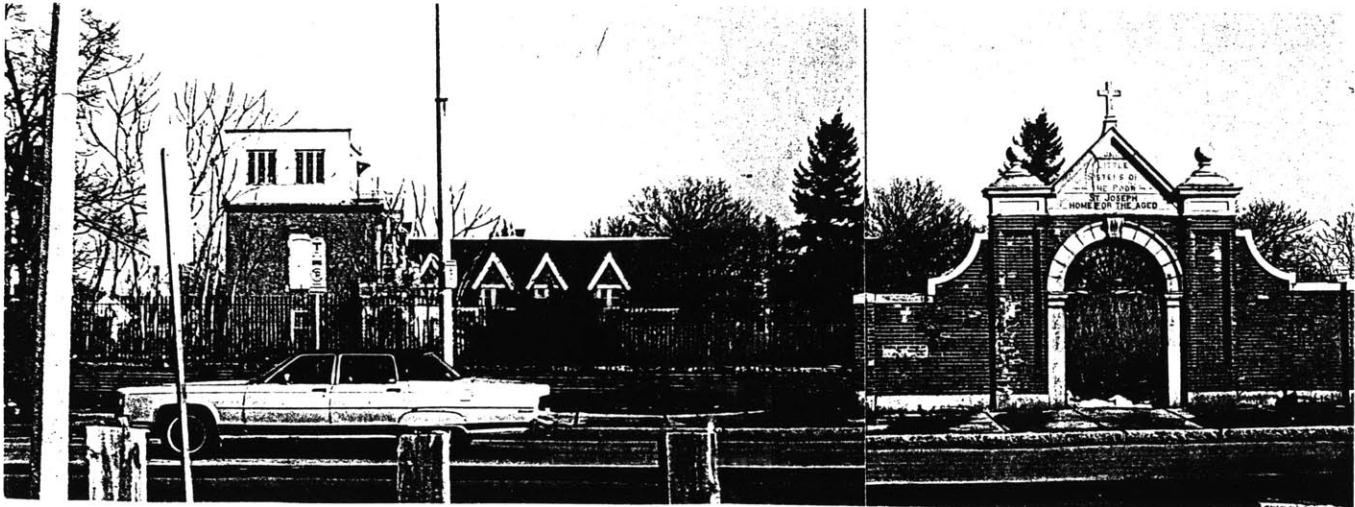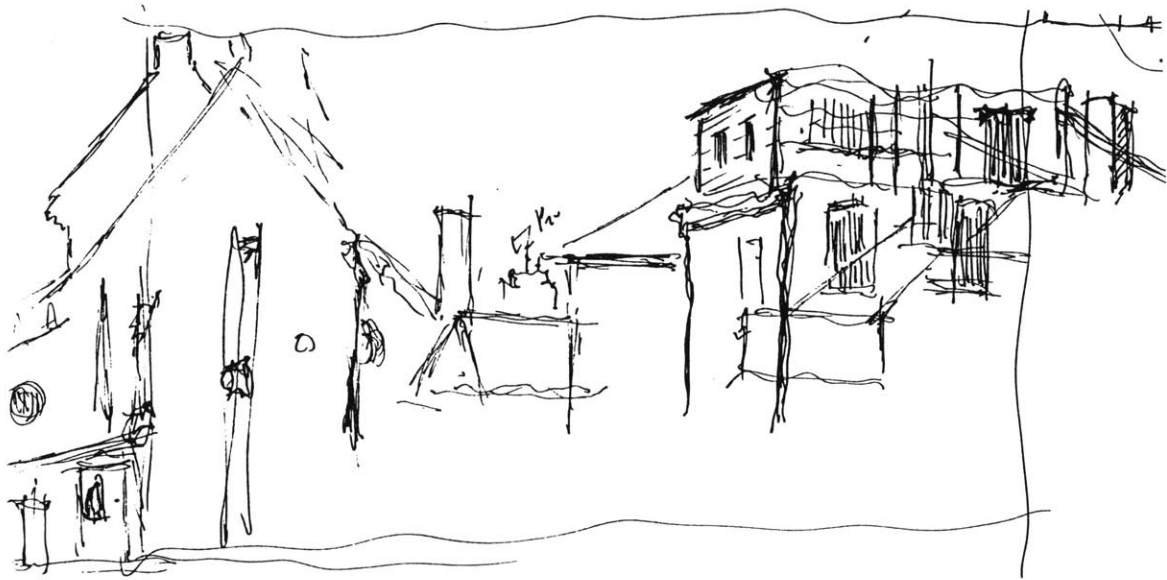
Empty lot at the intersection of Blue Hill avenue and Dudley Street. DSNI is planning on turning this lot into a town commons. View from the empty lot shows small commercial development along Blue Hill Avenue and its relationship to Alianza Hispana.
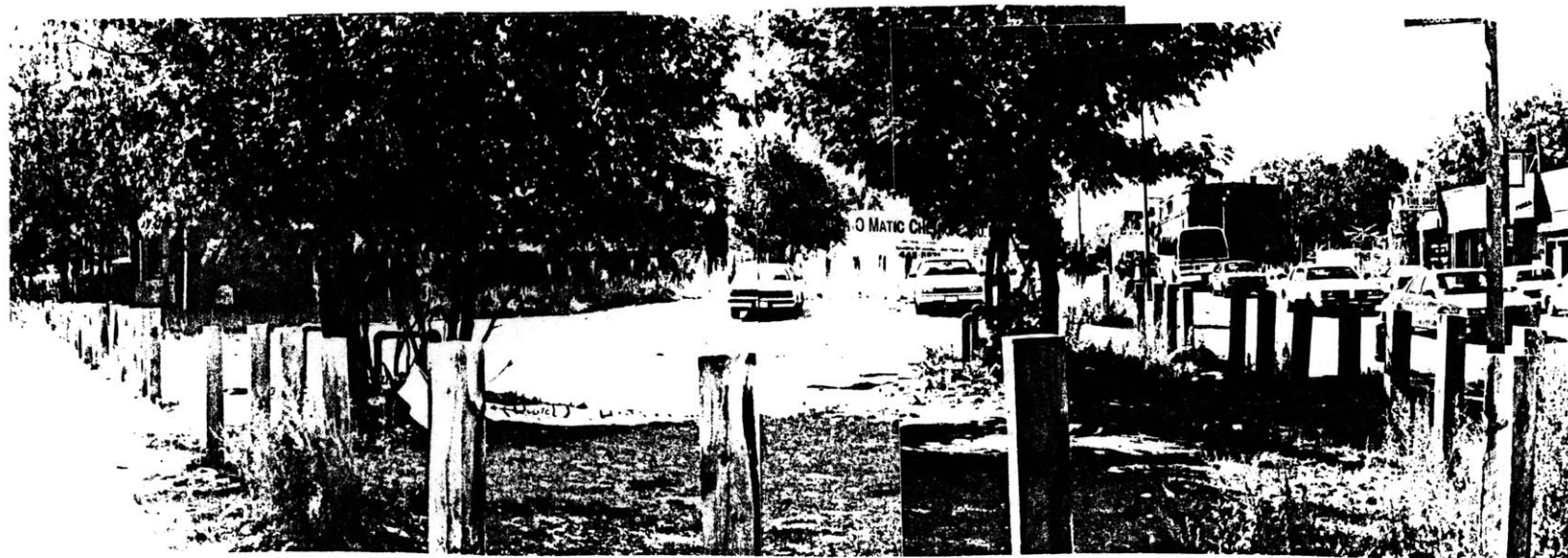
(D.) Along Dudley Street, Wood and masonry housing alternates with empty lots and low brick buildings.

E.
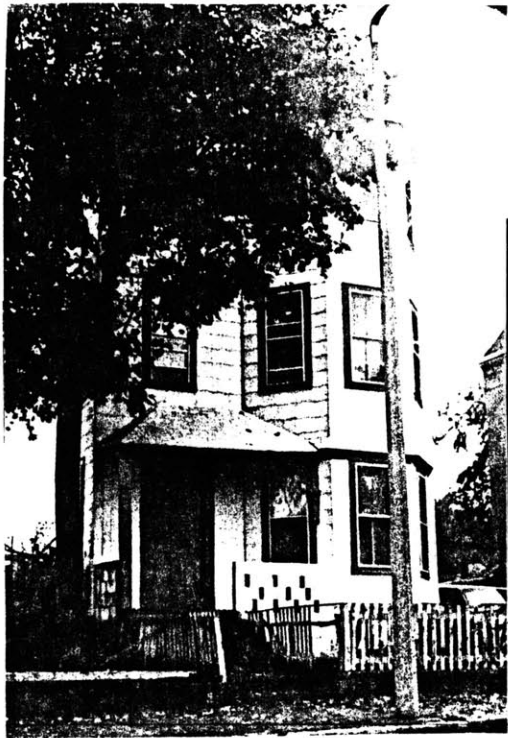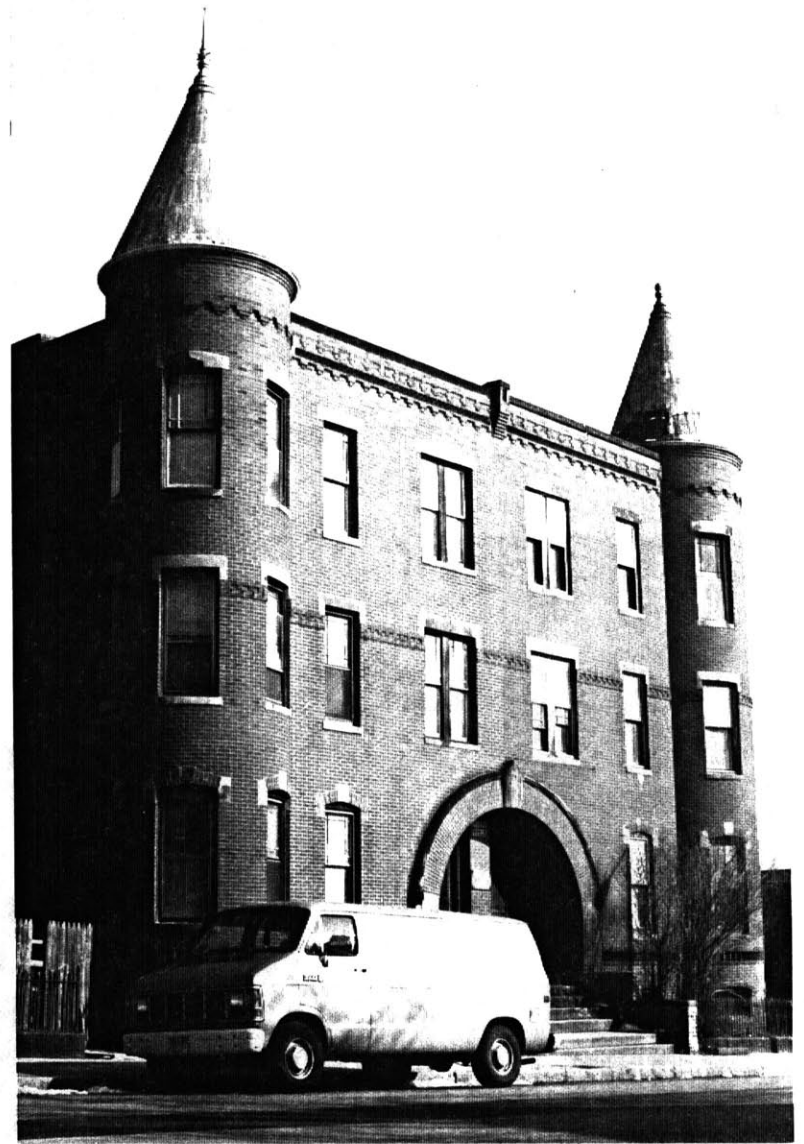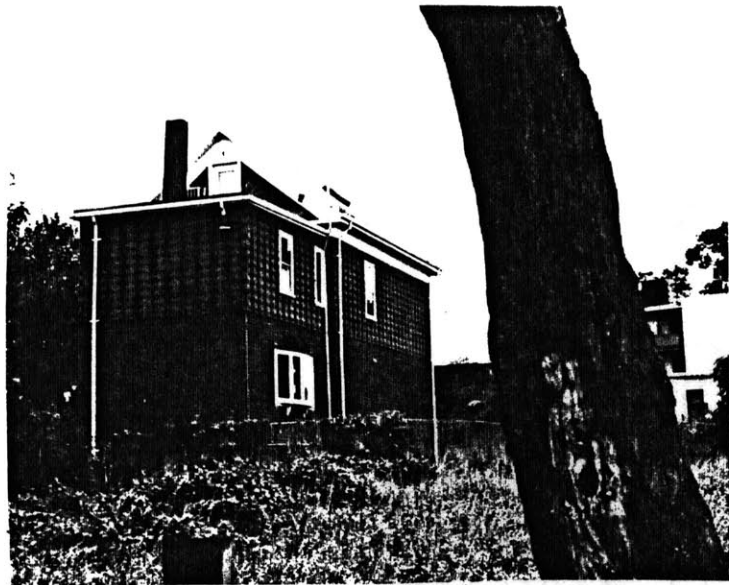
The Emerson School is located along Dudley Street: its playground is an asphalt covered open space.

G. Near DSNI , there is small commerical development, an abandoned factory, some housing, and a streetfront ministry.

(H.) Housing, the Defenders of the Faith church, and the apartment building on the East Cottage near Dudley Street. The block beyond the Defenders of the Faith church was chosen as the site for this thesis.

(I.) Mary Hannon Playground and apartment buildings between Leyland and Dudley.
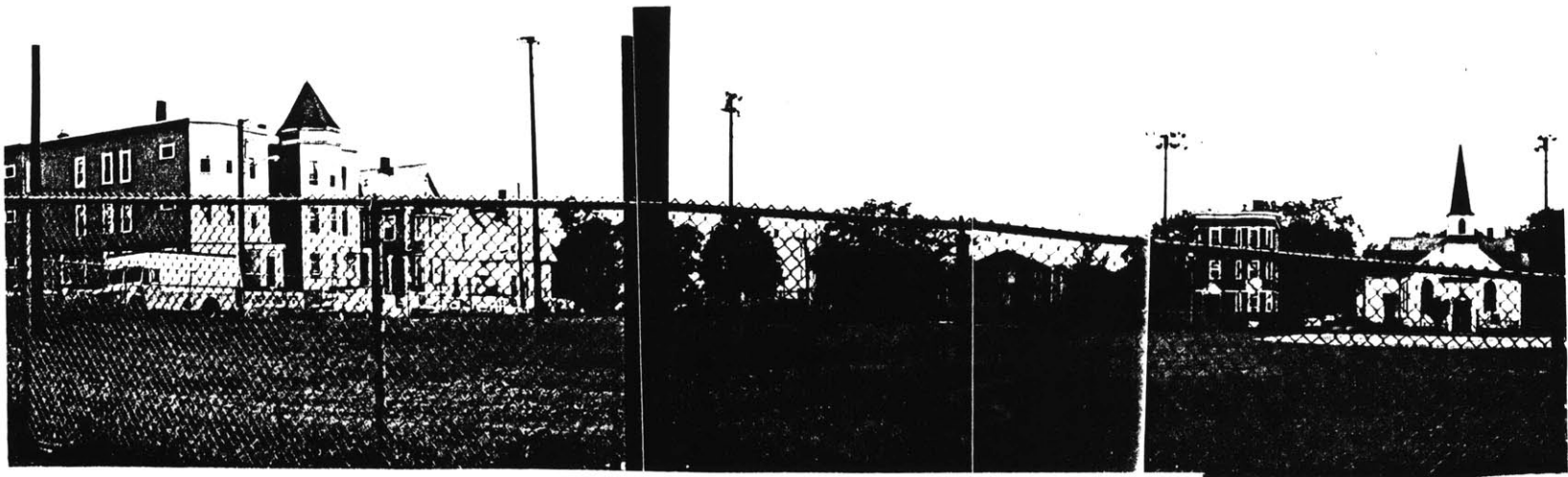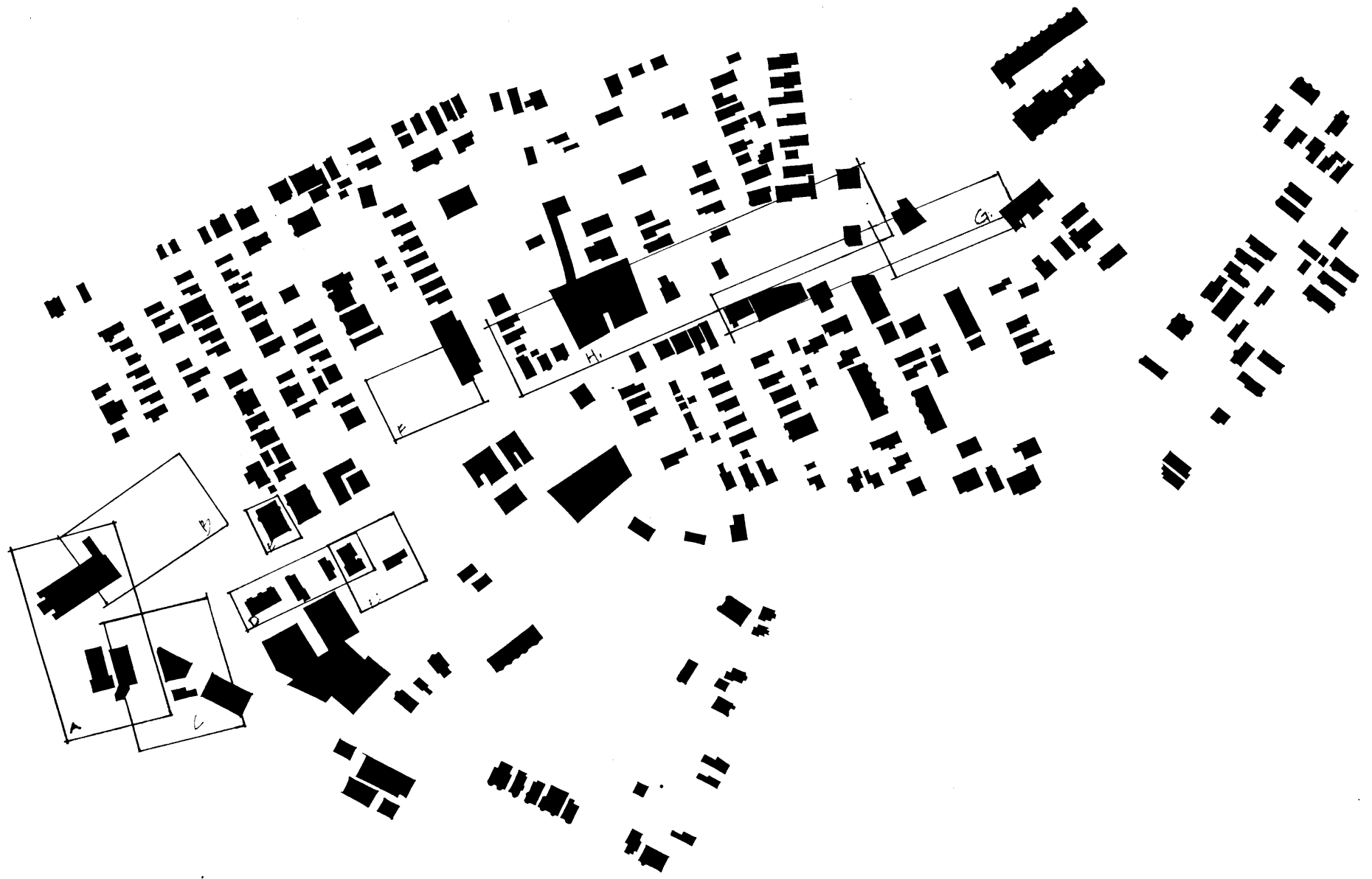
Site Selection

DSNI's physical master plan for the Triangle area includes 500 units of affordable housing, a "village commons" located at the intersection of Blue Hill and Dudley, landscaping and tree planting throughout the neighborhood, retail and small office development, and two new community centers. Originally, DSNI envisioned one small community center, located close to the village commons. However, as plans for new housing developed, the purpose of the community/recreation centers shifted. As the purpose of the centers shifted, so did their sites. DSNI decided to build two centers located several blocks away from Dudley Street adjacent to the new housing development. The rationale for relocating the centers was that the buildings could double as a marketing tool to attract families to the new housing.[1] The centers would not only provide for unmet needs in the community, but also accommodate the anticipated needs of families who move into the new housing. The revised sites are located within the heart of neighborhood, the physical center of the Dudley Triangle.

However, as DSNI has engaged youth and adults in a programming process over the last several years, the program and scope of the community centers has again changed. Adults have talked about the community center as a "neighborhood living room", a place to come together and cross boundaries. Youth working with DSNI have complied a long "wish list" of desired programs which include a number of public scale uses, such as a pool and cafeteria. These shifts in program and scope mandate larger buildings than originally envisioned. DSNI now estimate that the two community centers will be 30,000 square feet each.

Alternative thesis site

One of the two planned community centers is located on Cottage Street, three blocks back from Dudley Street. For the purposes of this thesis, I have chosen to explore what the community center might be like if it were located directly on Dudley Street, at the intersection of Dudley and Cottage.

The choice of an alternate site was made for several reasons. First, a site directly on Dudley Street seems most appropriate for a relatively large building intended to serve as a community-wide institution. The Dudley Street location is visible and central and avoids the problems of massing, zoning, and accessibility associated with developing a community-scale use on a purely residential block. There are several existing human service agencies in Dudley. Formally as well as socially, they struggle to add up to something larger.

The community center should be sited in a way which strengthens and integrates existing neighborhood assets, such as Mary Hannon Park and the neighborhood retail strip.

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[1] Interview with Andrea Nagel, May 1, 1992.

It should help link existing physical resources into something larger. It should be tied to other community "centralizing" functions such as public transportation, schools, existing parks and stores. The building should be integrated into street life rather than divorced from it.

A community center linked to the residential life of a district and a community center linked to the economic life of a community are both valuable. Because Dudley residents describe the proposed community centers as a community living room, "meeting place" and organizing base which cuts across ethnic boundaries, it seems to make sense in this case to link the building to the commercial life of Dudley.

The site chosen has the additional advantage of proximity to existing and proposed neighborhood resources. Defenders of the Faith church, is next door, Mary Hannon playground is nearby. Some tires and timbers are on this lot indicating that kids have used this lot for play. A playground and community garden are on Leyland street. Bird Street is considering the redevelopment of 1 Leyland street into a building which provides club activities and computer resources. One Leyland Street is a currently abandoned and flooded three story building. There are also problems in this area. The drug activity which was expelled from Mary Hannon Park has moved to Leyland Street and community built resources such as the garden and play lot are now difficult to use.

SHOPS

BUS STOP

DUDLEY ST.

PROPOSED SITE

CHURCH

MARY HANNON PLAYGROUND

LEYLAND ST.

COTTAGE GREEN APTS.

PLAYLOT

COTTAGE ST.

NORTH
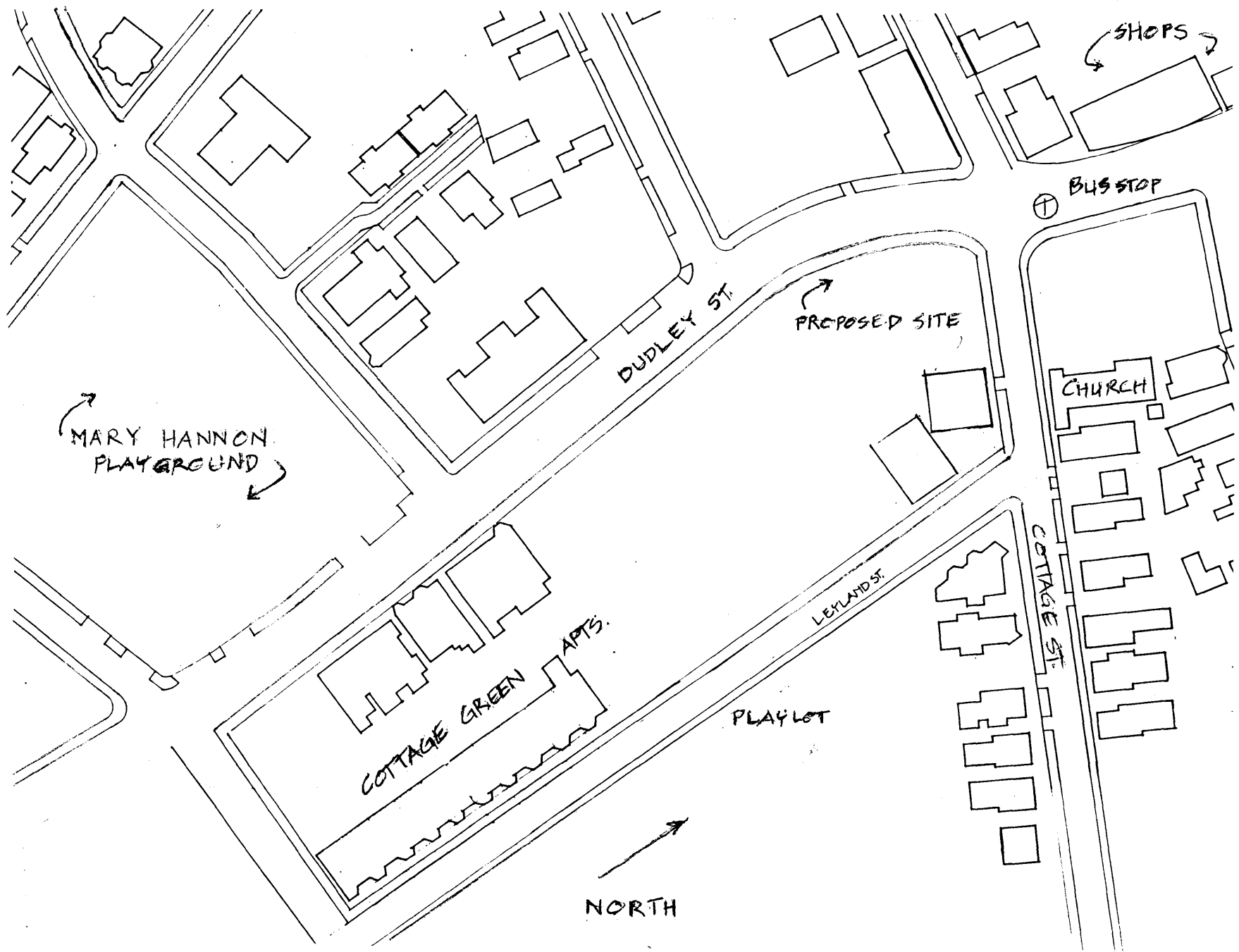
Program

DSNI executive director Gus Newport, recorded his observations of the community center planning process in a "Draft Brief History of DSNI. He wrote about the youth, adult, and human service groups,

> Each group provided valuable and varied feedback. The youth enthusiastically envisioned community space that offered basketball, swimming, college and career counseling, tutoring and classes in dance and martial arts among many more activities. The parents, on the other hand, were primarily concerned with rethreading the social fabric in the neighborhood. They wanted a sense of 'community' ever present rather than just in these two new centers. The agency representatives foresaw the array of programs at the centers serving all sectors of the community, including children, youth, adults, and elderly.[2]

There are many different views of the ideal community building. Some adults view the community center as an organizing base and place for residents to cross ethnic and class boundaries. Teenagers, want "a place to hang out and be with my friends."[3] Social workers who work with younger children want "a place where kids can be kids." Other human service providers envision "a place with specifically structured activities and opportunities--not just generic hangouts."[4] People who work actively with older teens talk about the importance of affiliation and belonging, the need to be part of a group with its own identity and base of control. They want a place that people can belong to. Other activists talk about the need to feel competent and skilled, to feel capable of giving something back.

Some of these goals and visions conflict. The proposal here is to allow these conflicting goals to co-exist by offering a range of spaces that meet a range of needs. Specifically, the community center is envisioned as a complex of buildings which offers four types of space for four types of activities. The community center will consist of resource spaces open to people of all ages and background, age-specific spaces which smaller groups of youth can appropriate and control, general hang out areas, and

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[2] Eugene Newport,"The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Roxbury, MA: Brief History and Observation" (draft), July 1991, p. 7.

[3] Andrea Nagel and Gail Sullivan, Youthful Visions: Building a Foundation for Community, p. 23

[4] Interview with Mary Gunn, May 4, 1992.

support spaces. The complex is designed so that there are indoor and outdoor spaces which are appropriate for physical, social, creative, and retreat/work activities.[5]

Resource spaces are designed to be areas in which age mixing can occur -- programmed activities (classes, workshops) might be located in these spaces but resource spaces can also be used on a drop-in basis. Gertrudes Fidalgo, referring to her own passion for photography, talks about how people are much more open when they are doing things they love. The basic idea behind the resources spaces is that the social goals of mentorship and youth development can occur as youth become involved with activities they love.

Age-specific space is provided for more focused after-school day care activities. These spaces are more controlled than resource spaces.

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[5] Clare Cooper Marcus makes the distinction between physical, social,creative, and retreat spaces in her book: People Places. In this book, she describes the importance of allowing these four kind of spaces too-exist in outdoor playgrounds. She notes that some form of visual or built barrier between these kinds of spaces allows these different kind of activities to occur simultaneously.

The program is configured as follows:

Activity	Resource space	Age-specific space	Hangout	Supports
PHYSICAL	pool dance/exercise room weight room	outdoor play equipment	courtyard	locker rooms changing room
SOCIAL	theater/film auditorium	after school day care spaces day care center	winter garden with tables/chairs	snack counter
	main meeting room	meeting rooms for older youth		projection room storage--lights, microphones, chairs
CREATIVE	art studios sewing room wood shop		exhibition areas	storage loading area storage secure waste disposal and removal
	radio station/ recording area music rooms: practice spaces, performance areas, class space, and music library			staff office space
RETREAT/WORK	greenhouse indoor and outdoor study areas academic tutoring and resource center career resource center/ job bank counseling/negotiation rooms			

Male and female restrooms should be provided on each floor. An accessible restroom should be located on each floor.

A major issue for community centers is raising money for the support of operating expenses. Several of the youth center's resources are intending to serve the center while also bringing in revenues. These include the newsstand, daycare kitchen (which could also prepare food for retail sales), radio station and theater/film auditorium.

The color collages on the next several pages are preliminary graphic analyses, showing how this program might be deployed on the site. The first diagram is a site diagram.

In this site diagram, black spaces are resource spaces. The black spaces which have holes cut into them are meant to be light structures, which are partially indoors and partially outdoors. These might be buildings such as a greenhouse, tool area or open air stage. Dark gray is meant to be support space. Light gray is meeting and circulation. Orange is a resource space which is fairly separate from other spaces. Blue is a pool. Brown is administration or control points. Red spaces are places which are very special, places which have gathering significance. The red circle might be a fountain, the red square with a hole cut in it might be a free-standing gazebo or a gazebo attached to a play structure. The black circles are entry points. This collage is the basis for the subsquent design.
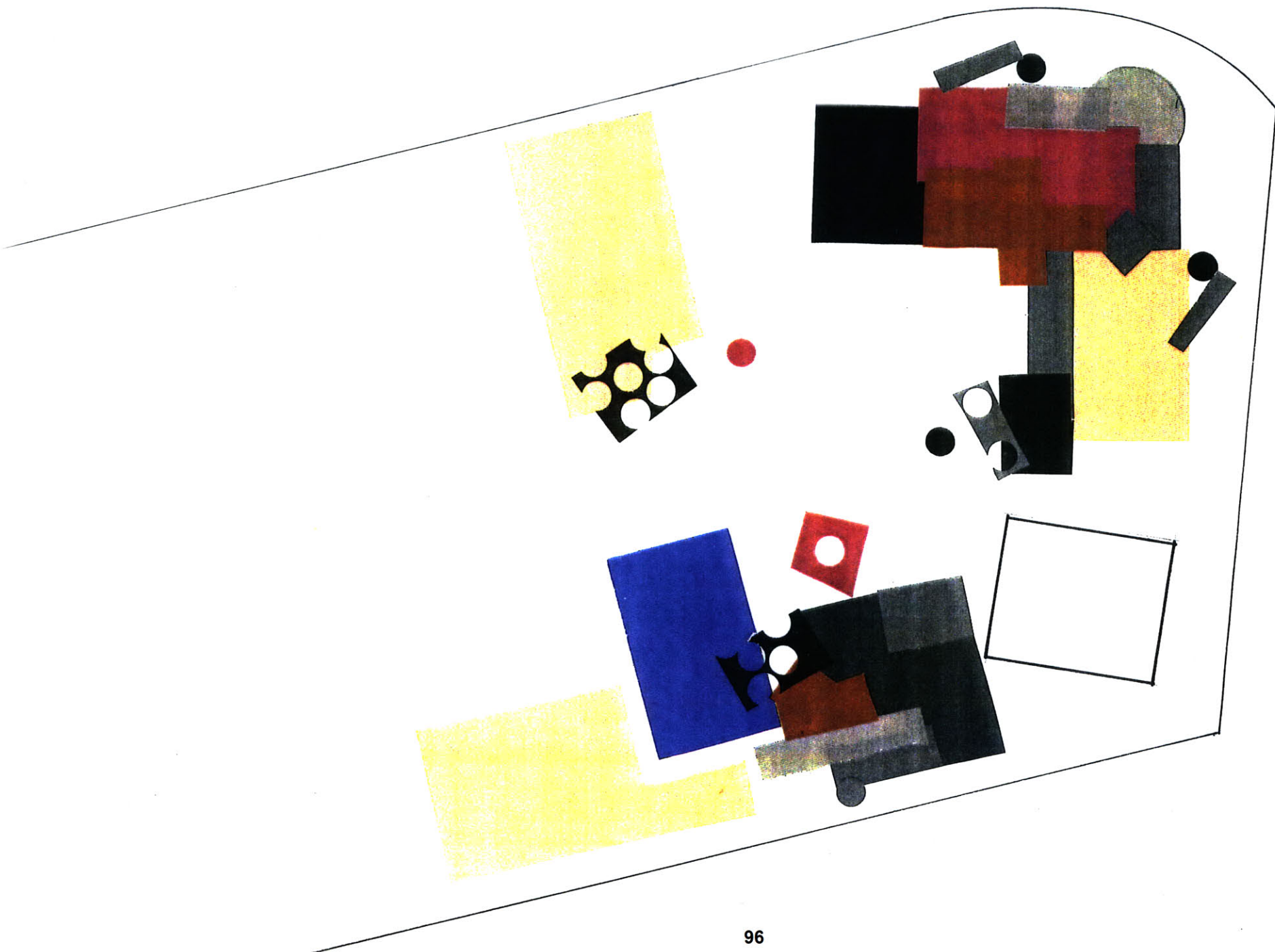
This next collage shows qualities of outdoor edges. The brown is a trellis, indicating that I would like to have a trellised arcade on the interior of the main building and would also like to have a trellis moving along a wall towards the south side of the site. The red circle is a fountain. The black is a greenhouse. The yellow strips are areas for play equipment. The purple is meant to indicate that decorative tile which might be used around the site and on the sidewalk.
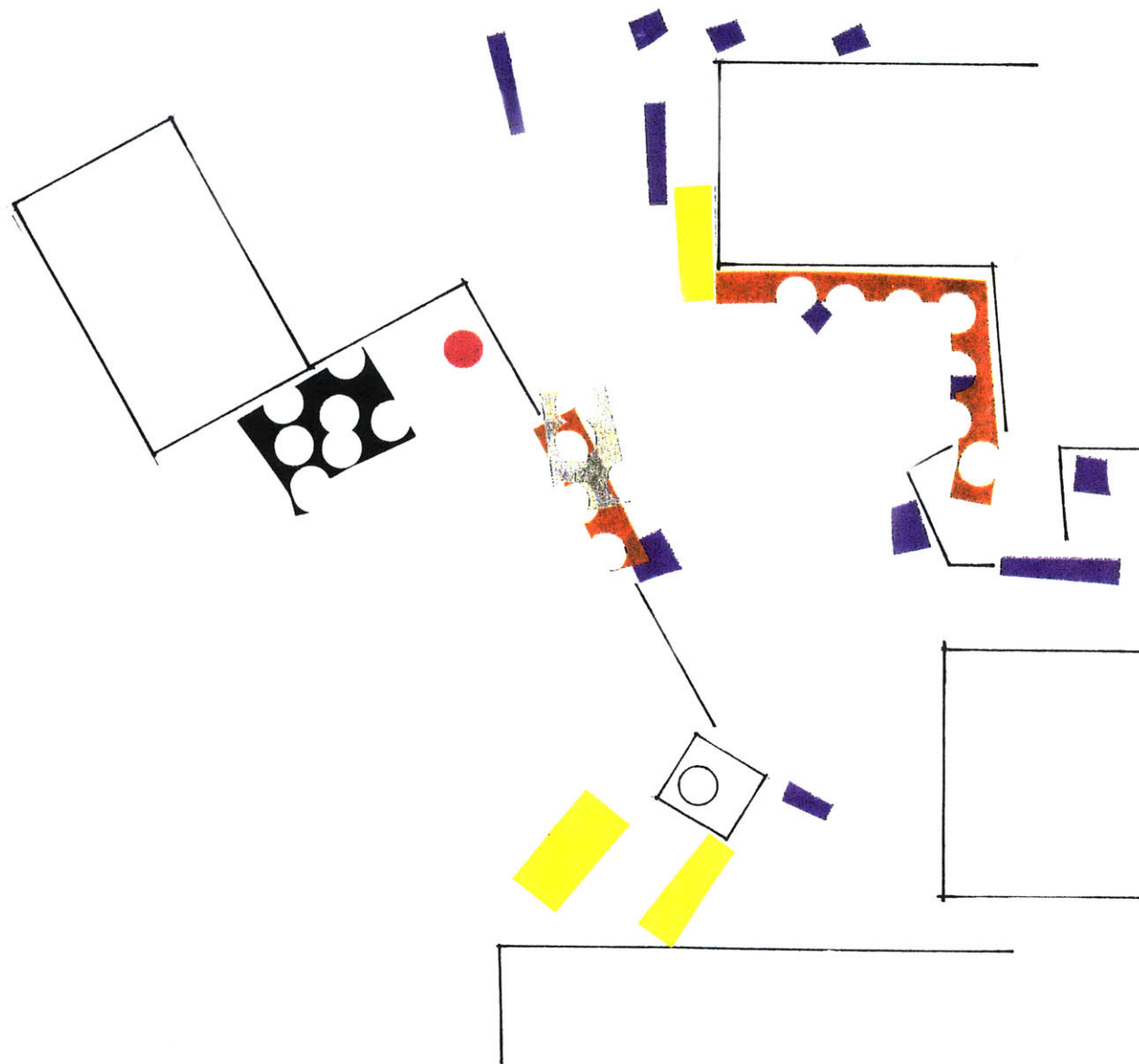
This final collage is the most abstract. It is meant as a study for a play structure, with the orange serving as wood platforms, purple indicating climbing places, and blue indicating sliding or water areas. The brown with holes cut in it is a bridge, and the thin brown lines are sitting places.

References for play structures are from "Play for All,"
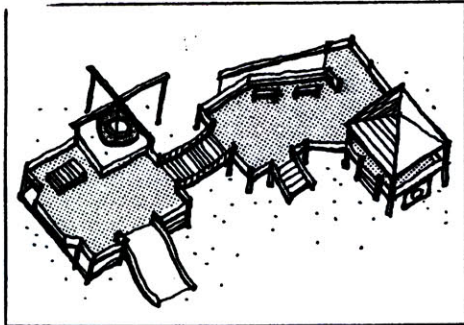
114 Effective play structures emphasize three-dimensional movement, variations in complexity and continuity of play experience.
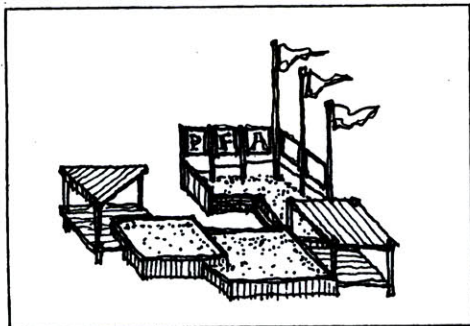
110 Play settings should emphasize linkage and flow.

99
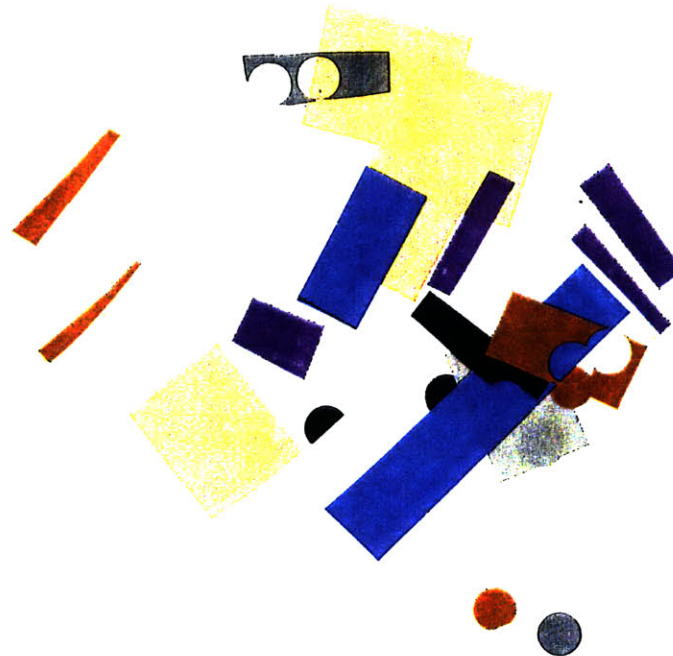
REFERENCES:

The following pages show references which influenced the design.

Reference: Community gardens in New York City

There are hundreds of community gardens in New York City, many of them located in the poorest neighborhoods of the city, where there is a great deal of abandoned land. Most of these resources are gated, and only a very few of them have experienced security problems. This is true even many of these gardens are used at night as well as during the day. They are considered good places to sit and talk and cool off late at night. There are a variety of ways of balancing security concerns and access needs. Sometimes keys are distributed to neighborhood residents who ask for them. Sometimes members of a neighborhood land trust hold keys and are responsible for opening the garden during set hours, which are posted on the garden gate.

Annual Repo. 1 1986

Physical elements present in most New York community gardens are: a gate, plants, water not just for watering but as an amenity (small fountain or pool or goldfish pond); pieces of demolished buildings stones, pipes, bottles, bricks, old tile flooring used to create edges; a small structure-- shed, trellis, or gazebo, a way of getting out of the heat, places to sit.

VARIETY OF SPECIES OF
FRAGRANCE PLANTS

RAISED BED FOR
CLOSER CONTACT

A QUIET PLACE TO STIMULATE THE EYES AND NOSE.

SCALE 1" = 10'
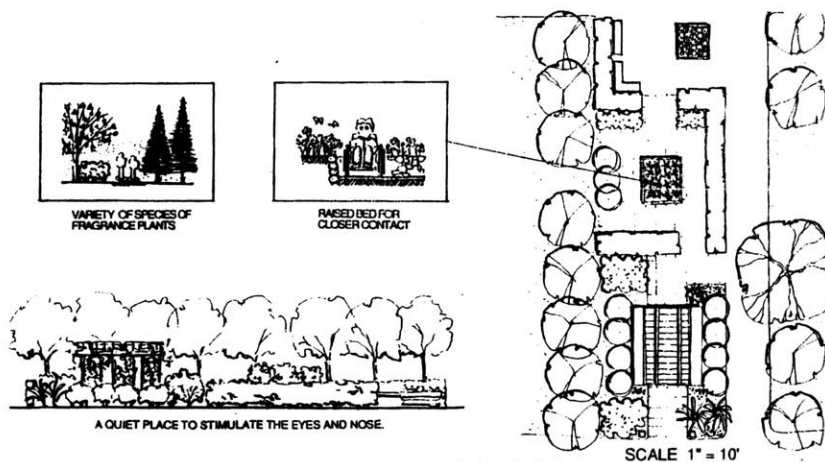
Reference: Neighborhood churches

Community centers are too often built as large scale institutions which are totally divorced from neighborhood life. Churches have traditionally been much more successful at integrating architecturally into neighborhoods. Because churches break down in massing, they end up being an institutional size that "works" despite often being substantially bigger than the structures around it. The English recreation hall example illustrates that the institutional size requirements of a youth center and a church may not be so far apart. The community center should not replicate church forms but should similarly breakdown in mass and provide human scale cues.
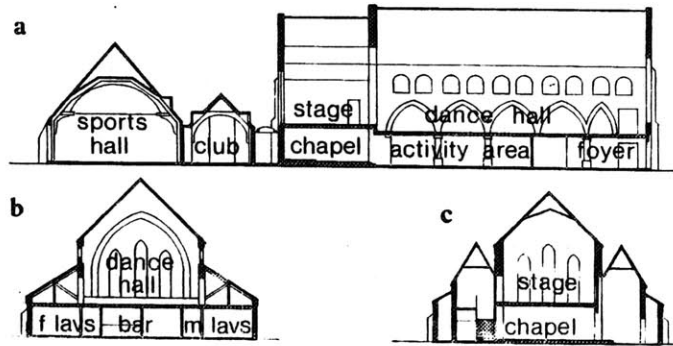
3a, b, c *Sections of St Marks*
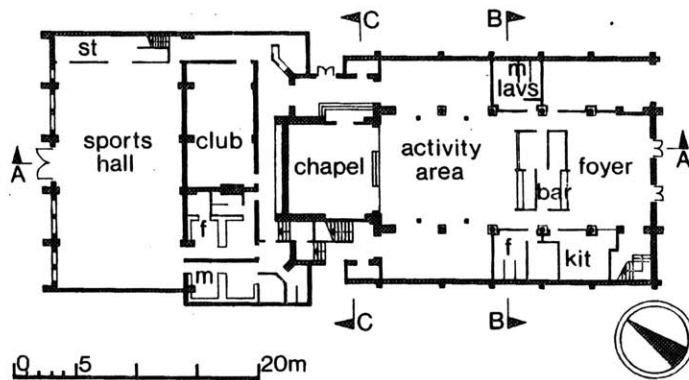
2 *Plan of the converted Church*
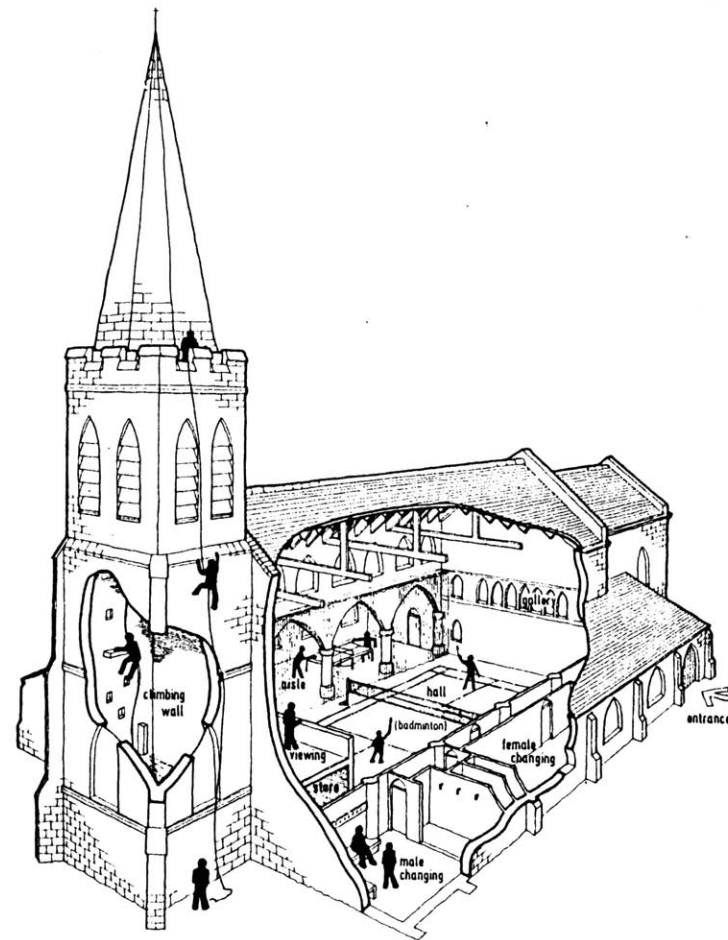
Reference: European schools and learning centers

Many institutional scale buildings in Europe use masonry and exposed wood.

103
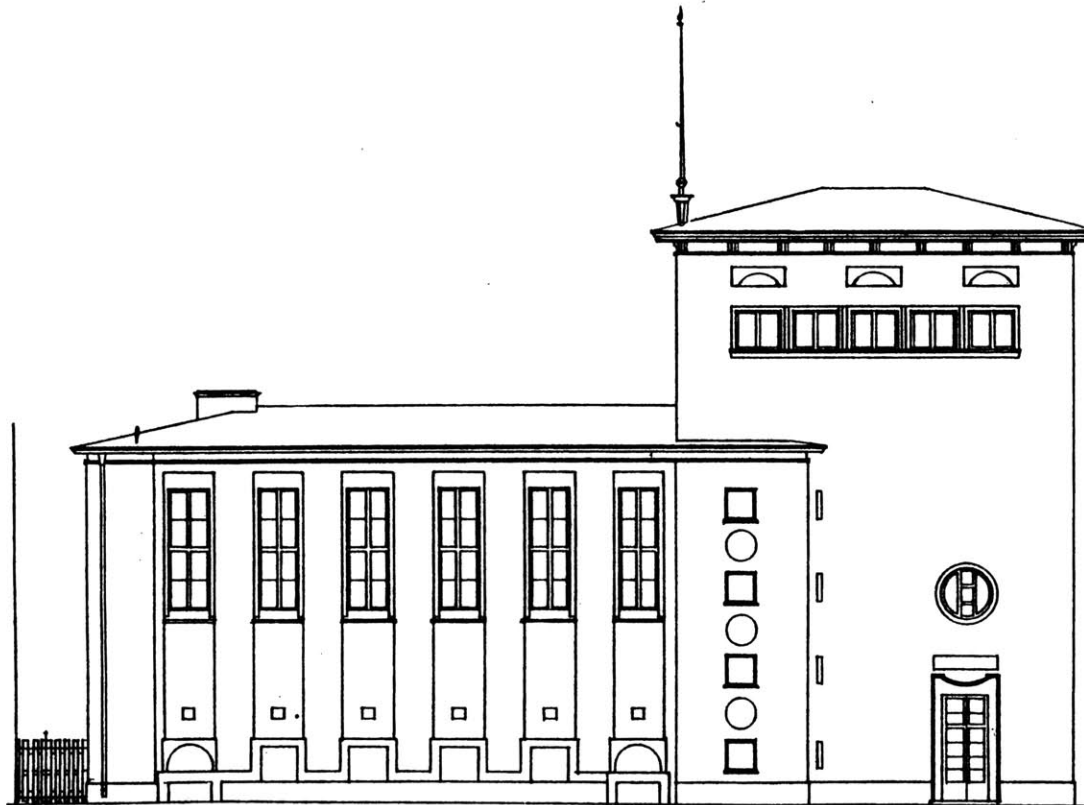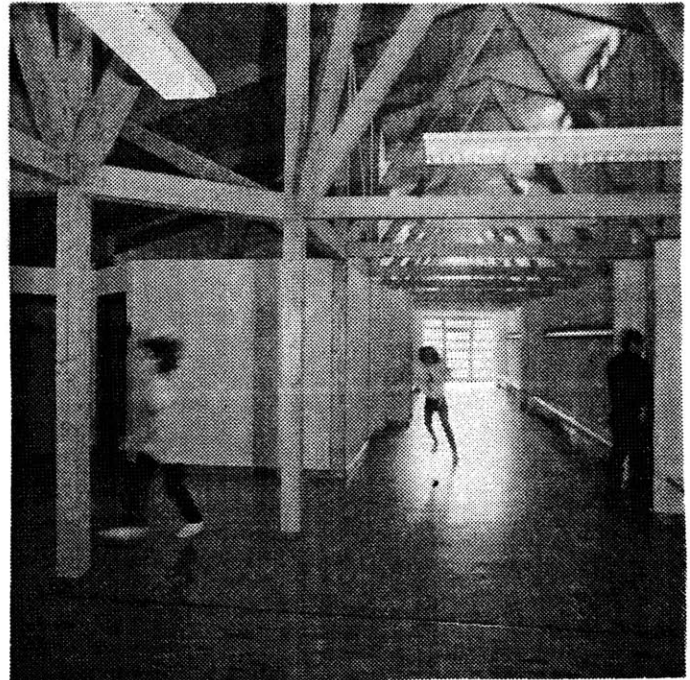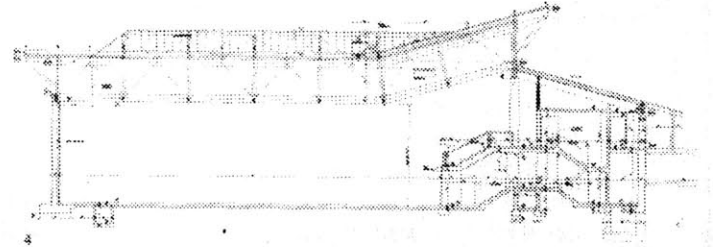
Reference: Hispanic city planning precedents

In the Hispanic hill towns of New Mexico, community space is created along linear passageways. "Plazas" are formed at the end of roads, intersections. Smaller semi-communal spaces are created on residential lots vis a vis positioning of buildings to road. Communal space does not need to be formed centrally, as in a town commons or Anglo-Saxon village square. A primary road acts as a line of registration and community space is developed either by a widening of two intersecting roadways or by the opening of a U-shaped piece of land along the roadway.

This is distinct from the Anglo-Saxon or European model which forms centralizing space by circumscribing an open plot of land with four roads (as in the Boston Common). The New Mexico precedent has value in Dudley for a variety of reasons. It is an example of creating community in an area which is organized linearly. The Dudley Triangle is similarly organized linearly, with Blue Hill avenue and Dudley Street serving as primary arterials.
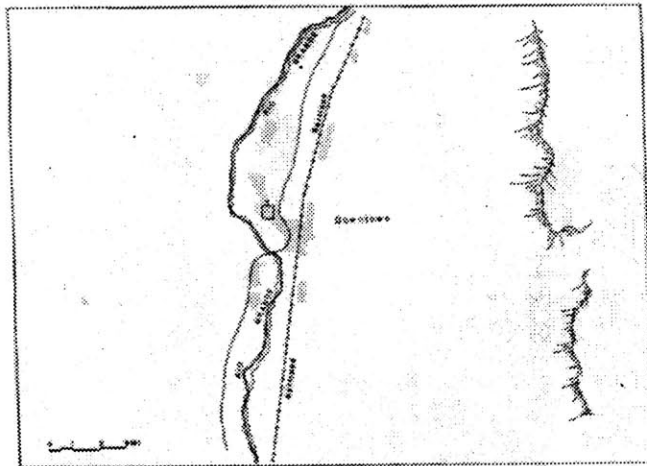
Sketch Plan of Early Railroad City.

Photo of Martineztown.

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Hispanic planning traditions have relevance in a neighborhood which is 30% Latino. Ruth Kochler analyzed the potential of appropriating Hispanic planning precedents when building community space in Dudley. In her 1989 MIT thesis, "Culturally Responsive Architecture: Housing and a Community Center in Dudley," she distinguished between Anglo-American and Latino models of building and presents a series of diagrams to present her point. The Hispanic planning criteria she established are: buildings are defensive in nature, walls enclose exterior space, building are walls and form continuous space with built edge, light open space alternates with closed built space.
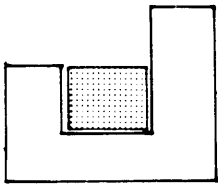
Figure 4.2

In the Latino model buildings are

defensive in nature; they act as

walls to enclose exterior space.
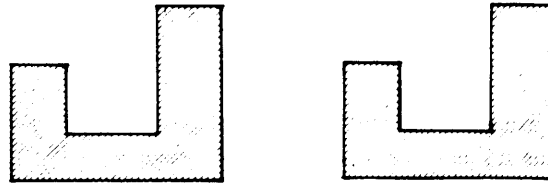
Figure 4.1

One of the major attributes of

Latino architecture is an alternation

of light, open space with closed,

built space.
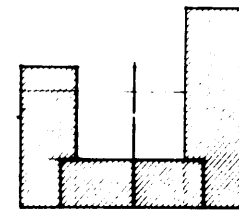
Figure 4.4

In the Latino model the idea

of a building as a wall is repeated

via a continuous built edge that

defines the block and street.

Reference: community places

The DSNI project presumes a major capital campaign and a substantial building. The following examples show very small scale projects which work as community places. These are included because the ideas generated in the architectural portion of this thesis are essentially large scale projections of things which have worked at a smaller scale.

The Dudley community center is expected to be a much more substantial building than any of the projects shown here. Until construction begins, however, the empty lot it is standing on can begin to be a community center. In effect this amounts to reversing the ordinary building process, whereby heavier structural parts of a building are constructed first with finishes and lighter structures built last.

DSNI could clear and enclose the proposed community center site, landscape it, and build simple structures which might later become a part of community center. These structures could be a place to get out of the sun such as a gazebo or open shed, a greenhouse, trellises, seating, sculpture, or water sculptures. Even if there is no water line to the street, simple water fountains can be built which use pumps and recycle water. Play equipment could be built too, but it should be incorporated into a larger area which provides something for older youth as well as for kids who use play equipment. Kids who are working over the summer should be involved in more than cleaning lots. Lots will invariably get dirty again over time and youth should be able to do work which has the potential for teaching something. They should also be able to see something new and relatively enduring appear as the result of their direct work

While building is going on, other activities such as frequent celebrations/cookouts could begin to take place. This would encourage people to begin to think of the site as important in the community even before building goes up. It could also provide an organizational base of neighborhood people who could be responsible for running the center once built. The point is: It is possible to derive more immediate benefits while engaging in a long term planning and development plan. It's possible to provide something before you provide everything. Since the point of DSNI is not to try to create a community center but to create a community--there are ways of utilizing the existing structure of neighborhood and creating something meaningful right away. The Green Oasis garden in the Lower East Side of Manhattan is a great example of this and a possible prototype. Green Oasis built a community center and gazebo on an abandoned lot which served as a de facto community center.
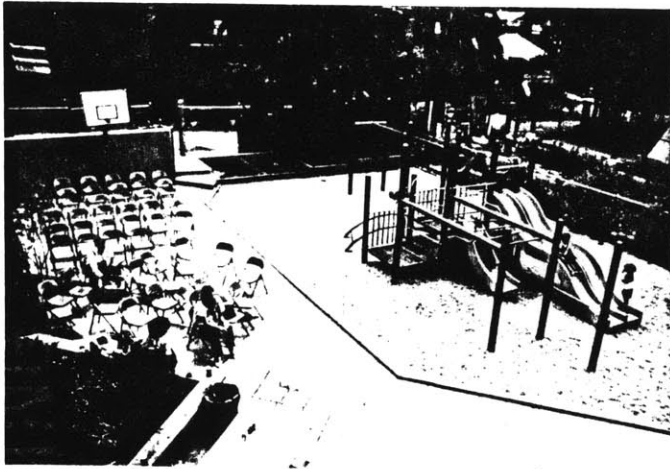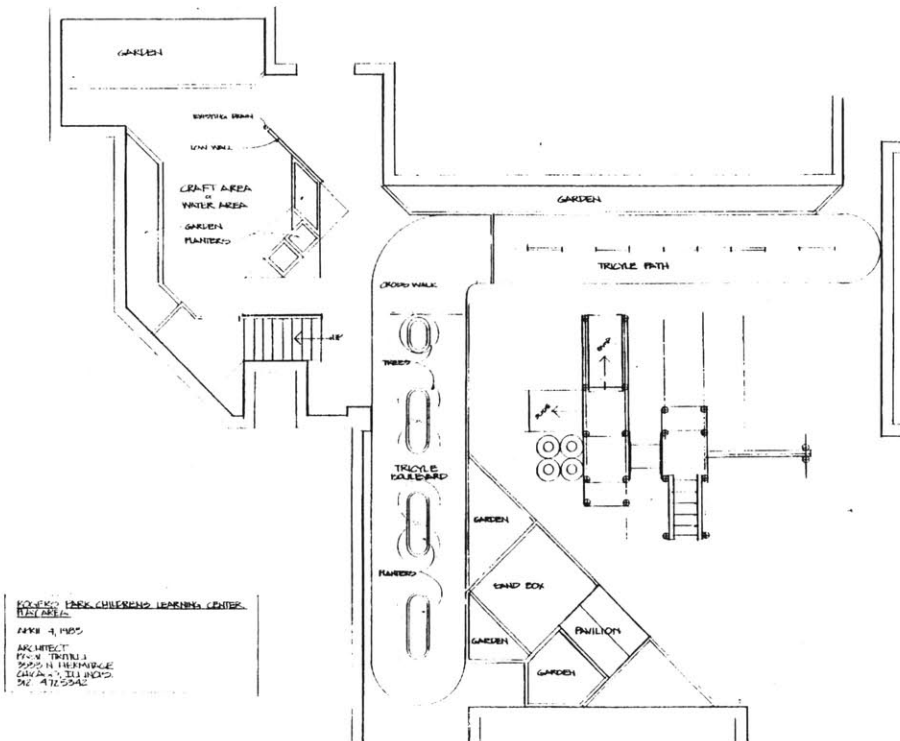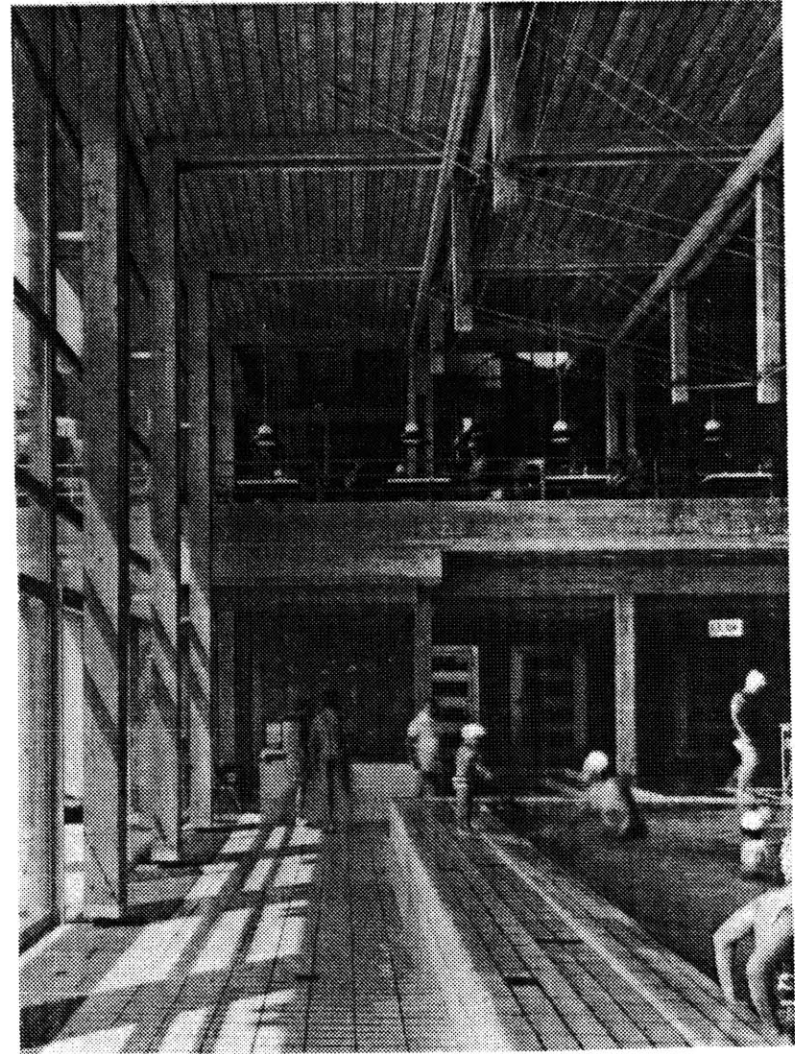
THE GREEN OASIS
Community Gardens Inc. E.8st C-D

Ty Grey

A PARTY GIVEN BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY. COME JOIN US!
ENTERTAINMENT! FOOD! BEVERAGES AND MUCH MORE!
COME OUT AND JOIN US! COME MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS AND MAKE FRIENDS!

GARDEN

GARDEN

CRAFT AREA
or
WATER AREA

GARDEN
PLANTERS

CROSS WALK

TRICYCLE PATH

TREES

TRICYCLE
BOULEVARD

PLANTERS

GARDEN

SAND BOX

GARDEN

PAVILION

GARDEN

KOUNKO PARK CHILDRENS LEARNING CENTER
PLAY AREA

APRIL 4, 1985

ARCHITECT

**Reference : interior swimming pools and light**

Reference: Little Sisters of the Poor site

I began this thesis working on the site of the abandoned Little Sisters of the Poor orphanage. This lot seemed to be a good lot to work on because it was open and central and close to existing commercial development. About halfway through the project, I learned that this site is unavailable to DSNI, because it is owned by the Archdiocese. Because I didn't want my thesis to be entirely theoretical, I moved to the project to its current site--at the corner of Cottage and Dudley.

These sketches show preliminary work which was done before relocating the site to Dudley and Cottage Street.
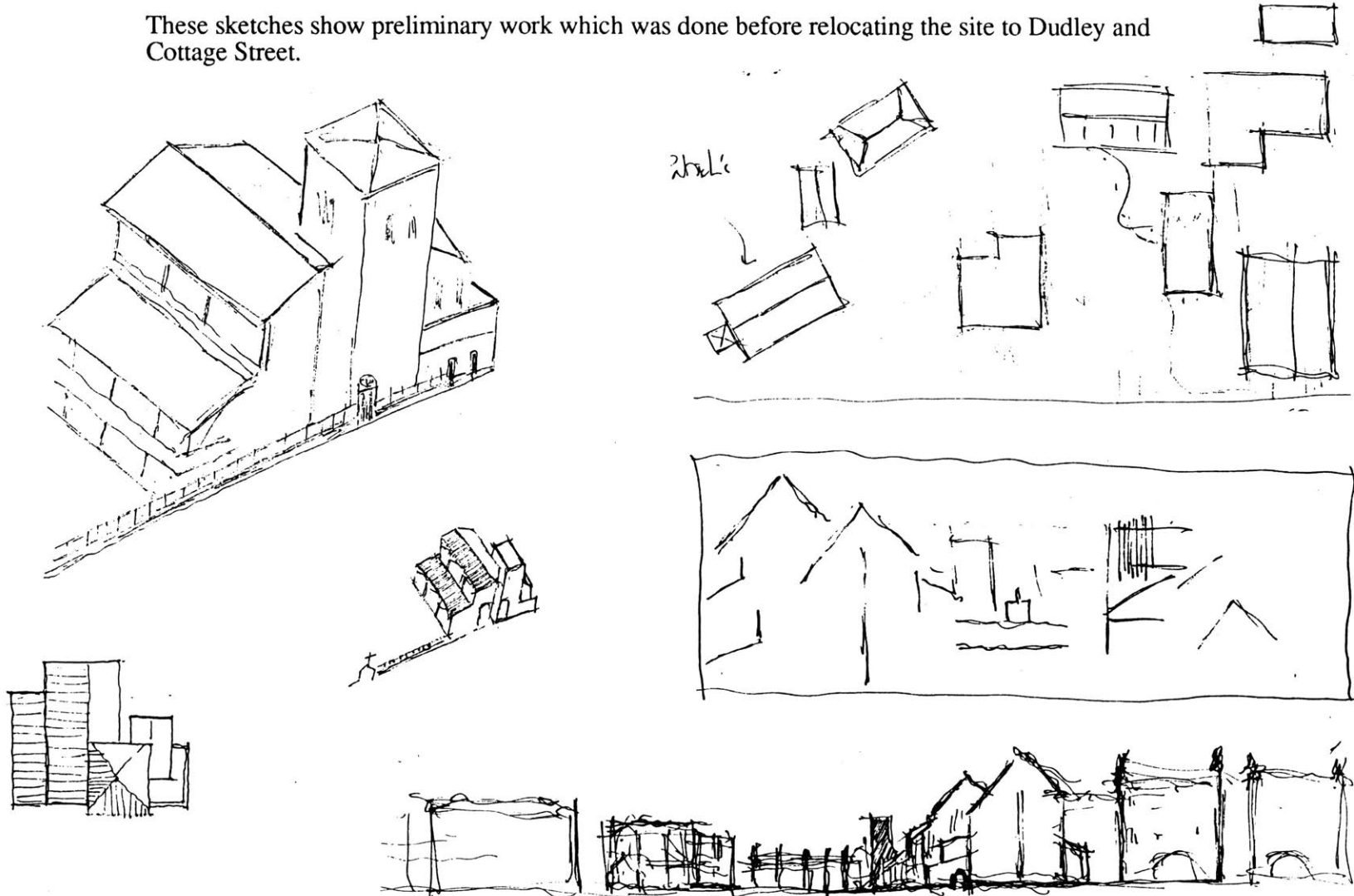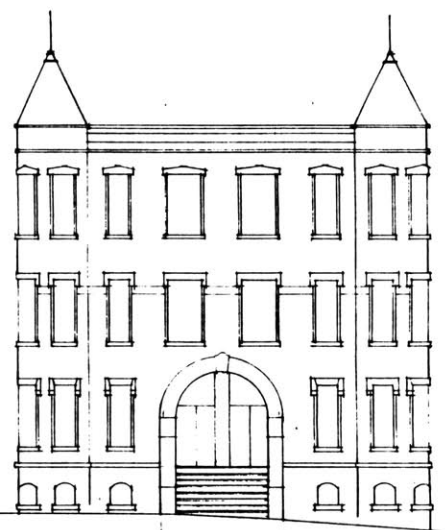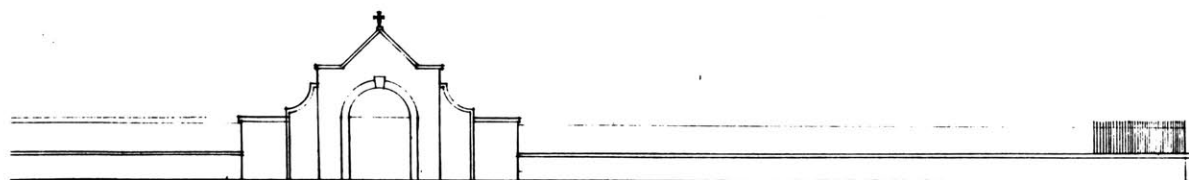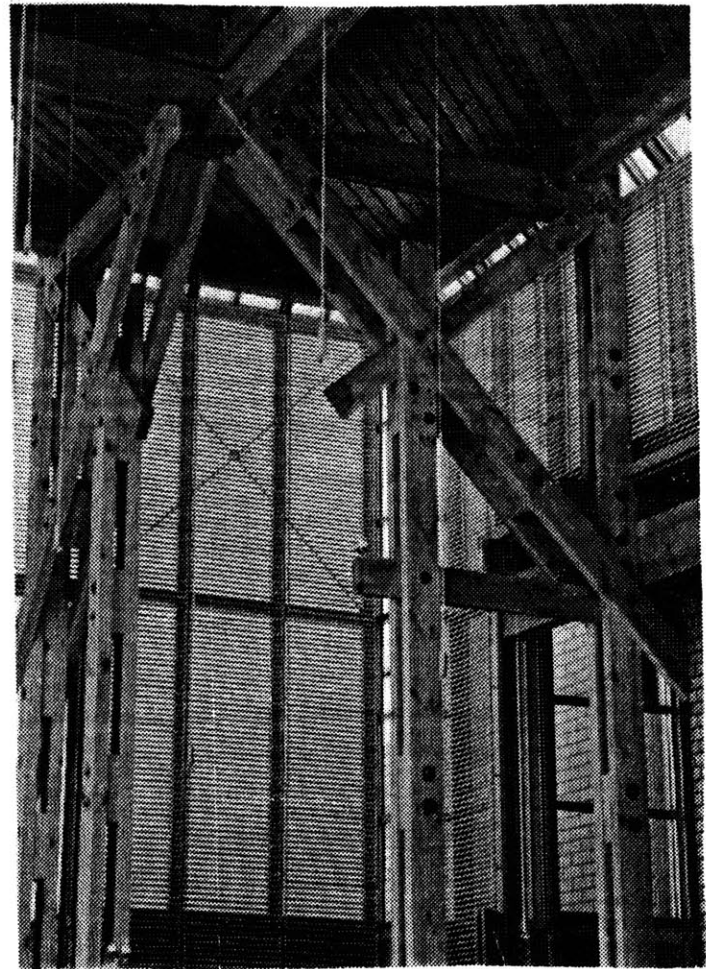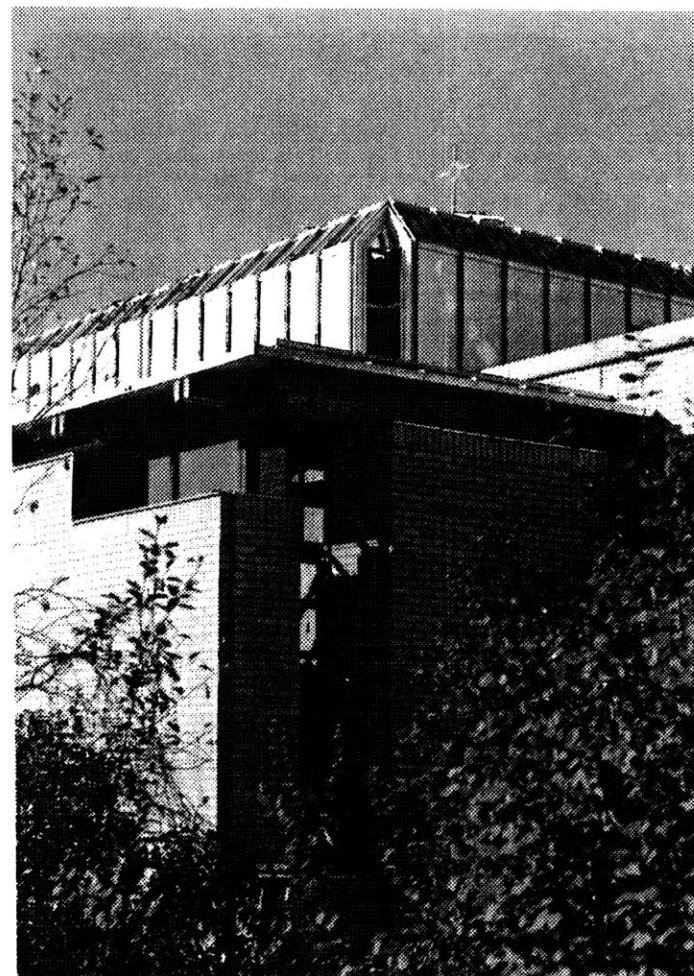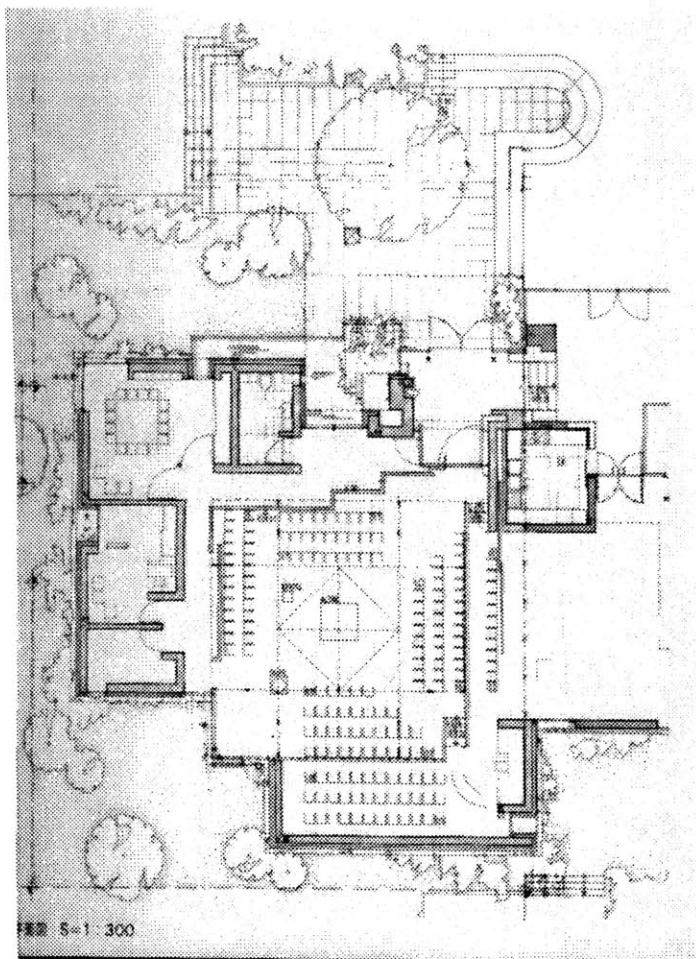
REFERENCE: Church of Grace, Wurzburg,

The Church of Grace at Wurzburg is included here, because the corner structure in this building is used for the corner structure of the proposed Dudley community center. This building is also an example of masonry and wood combined to create a warm institutional scale environment.

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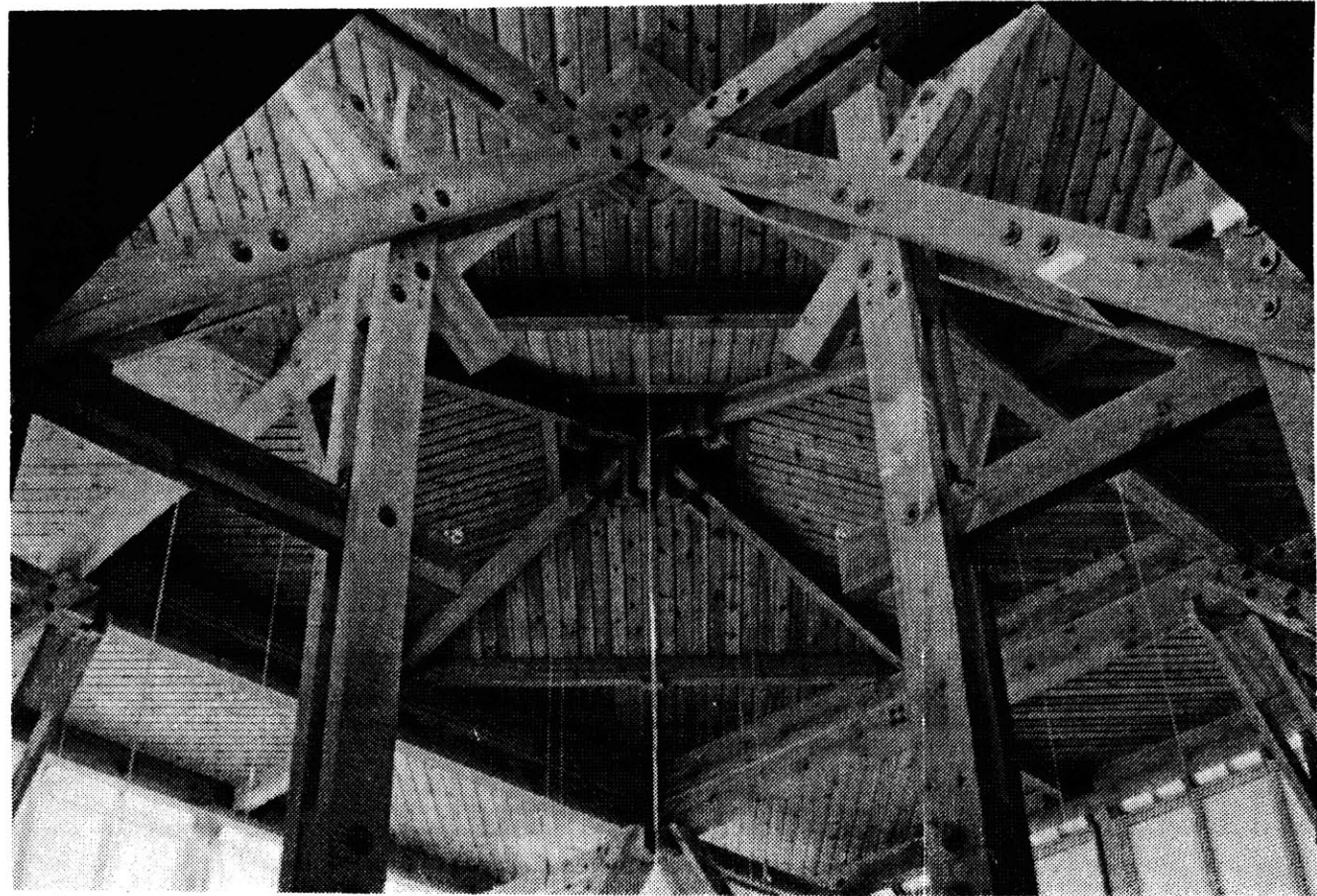
Site plan

1. community center
2. annex
3. pool
4. lower courtyard
5. upper courtyard/garden
6. proposed stores
7. fountain

A. existing apartment building (3 stories)
B. existing brick building (1 Leyland Street)--vacant (3 stories)
C. existing wood frame building--Defenders of the Faith church (1 1/2 stories)
D. existing brick building--apartments and "Jaraguas" restaurant (6 stories)
E. existing wood frame building--housing (3 stories)
F. existing community garden and play lot

The Dudley area community center consists of three structures--a main resource center, an annex with day care and studio space, and a pool building. These structures enclose a bi-level courtyard which can also be accessed directly from Dudley Street. The Dudley Street entrance is gated and can be locked at night.

It is assumed that the community center would be built as a culminating building, adjacent to a series of storefronts which would extend from the community center annex towards the Cottage Green apartments. It is assumed (for the purposes of this thesis only) that Dudley Pizza and the social club located on this site could move down Dudley Street and become part of the storefront block.

Outdoor spaces are configured so that a variety of activities can occur simultaneously. The main courtyard is mostly open for running around and playing. At night, lights could be strung up and it could be used for concerts, dinners, weddings, and other special events. Benches and play equipment are primarily located in shady areas--below trees and trellises. There is also seating incorporated into the covered walkway which is part of the main community building. There are many exit doors opening from the main courtyard building onto these walkways, so that in spring and summer, activity can spill outside. If security is a major issue at these times, the main gate can be locked so that the courtyard is accessed only by entering the main building and traveling past a check-in area.

The walkway/entrance is very wide, allowing for activity as well as movement into the site. The upper courtyard is more intensively planted and is intended to serve as a quieter community garden space.

Construction System

The community center is constructed of exterior load bearing masonry and interior heavy timber and masonry. The interior load bearing walls are placed 24 feet apart on center. Intermediary posts divide the 24' spans into 16'-8' spans. These posts are secondary structure--they catch the floor boards. Beams and columns are laminated heavy timber (less expensive than rough hewn timber for spans of this length). Load bearing walls are placed perpendicular to the street.

The building is constructed of masonry and wood because most of the existing buildings in the neighborhood are masonry or wood. Most residential buildings in the Dudley neighborhood are wood buildings approximately 24 feet wide. Most institutional buildings are masonry. The small commercial buildings along Dudley Street are wood or masonry. Although most residential buildings in this neighborhood are houses constructed of wood, all of the existing buildings on the Cottage-Leyland-Dudley block are brick masonry with interior wood. The exterior masonry -interior heavy timber system was chosen for this building, because the community center is intended to mediate between standard masonry of institutional buildings and wood of much local residential housing. Also, this type of building system can be constructed relatively easily and quickly by a combination of professionals and construction trainees and volunteers. It is also easier to change, less immutable than other building types which are code-approved for the construction of institutional buildings.

There are two places in which the structural pattern of the building is broken. At the round room on the corner of Dudley and Cottage, the structural system shifts to accommodate the shape of the room. Trusses over the auditorium span in a different direction than the rest of the structure--here, the structural walls are parallel to the street not perpendicular to it. The structural pattern is shifted here so that the trusses can span over the narrower dimension of the auditorium.

Also, in the daycare/after school annex and the pool building, the primary structure is not perpendicular to Dudley and Leyland but is instead perpendicular to the internal "street" created within the block. The swimming pool has a system of wood truss structures rather than beams because of the wide spans required by a pool use.

1. **primary structure (load bearing 8" x 8" posts)**
2. **masonry load bearing wall (12" deep with insulation and finishes)**
3. **secondary structure (6" x 6" posts)**
4. **parallel chord trusses**
5. **triangular trusses**

First Floor Plan--Main Building

The building is at grade, facilitating access for people who have physical disabilities. There are two primary entrances. The main entrance is on Dudley Street. It leads to the main lobby of the building. An administrative office with a counter for information and checking "colors" is on the right as you walk in the front door. The main public meeting room is on the left. Directly in front is an open kitchen/snack counter. The interior of the greenhouse can be seen as you enter.

Main stairs, elevator, and information boards are located in the lobby. As you turn towards the main stairs, you can see out into the courtyard and the edge of the winter garden which serves as a main informal gathering area. In winter and when the weather is bad, this area is intended to function as a substitute for the courtyard. The winter garden is sunk a few steps below grade. There is a short ramp for people who use wheelchairs. It does not have walls to separate it from the rest of the building but is defined by benches which span between the structural posts of the building interior. Seating is also incorporated into the exterior structural wall. The snack counter is located near the winter garden so that the garden can be used as an informal cafeteria area. Chairs and small tables could be set up near the benches.

The snack counter area can double as a concessions stand for the theater/film auditorium. The auditorium takes up most of the Cottage Street wing of the building. Theater/film auditorium--could be run by the center and/or sublet for commercial films--can be accessed directly from Cottage Street, lobby in front of auditorium, at night, lobby/auditorium can be closed off from other parts of building. The auditorium exit doors open directly onto Cottage Street. Exit doors also open onto the greenhouse hallway. This is for special events when it might be nice to go from the auditorium out into the greenhouse and then out into the courtyard.

The working greenhouse is located at the end of the Cottage Street wing of the main building. The hallway leading to it is essentially an extension of the greenhouse. There are plants covering the platforms and steps along the hall. Tables and chairs can be set up among the plants. The intent is for the hall to be available as a study area. There are many kinds of places to study and learn other than libraries. A place to study should be a place you feel like sitting in. The corridor could be a place to read, and work in the late afternoons. The hallway has doors which can isolate it acoustically from the other parts of the building. Of course, when the doors connecting it to the main lobby area are open, the corridor could be a noisier place, where people could meet and talk and work together on projects.

DSNI's DAC International plan indicates that neighborhood residents would like a flower shop in the neighborhood. The greenhouse could raise plants which might be in front of the youth center at the newsstand or could be sent to other neighborhood stores. The greenhouse might also raise some of the food which is served in the snack area.

A job counseling and resource center is located at the end of the Dudley Street wing. The newsstand adjacent to the resource center is intended to be a youth-run newsstand where kids can learn about running a business. The counseling and resource

center is also intended for adults and should contain the neighborhood skills bank, job opening information, scholarship listings, and general resources which help people identify how to go about realizing their work-related goals. A glass window leading from the study area of the job center to the winter garden helps parents keep an eye on children playing in the winter garden area.

Annex--first floor plan

Day care center is located on the first floor of the annex. The front half of the building is at grade, the back half is raised off the ground a few steps. Primary activity areas are located at the front of the building, while the director's office, staff meeting room, rest rooms, and laundry machines are primarily at the back of the building. However, the kitchen which services the day care is located in the front of the building so that it can double as a take-out restaurant for the neighborhood.
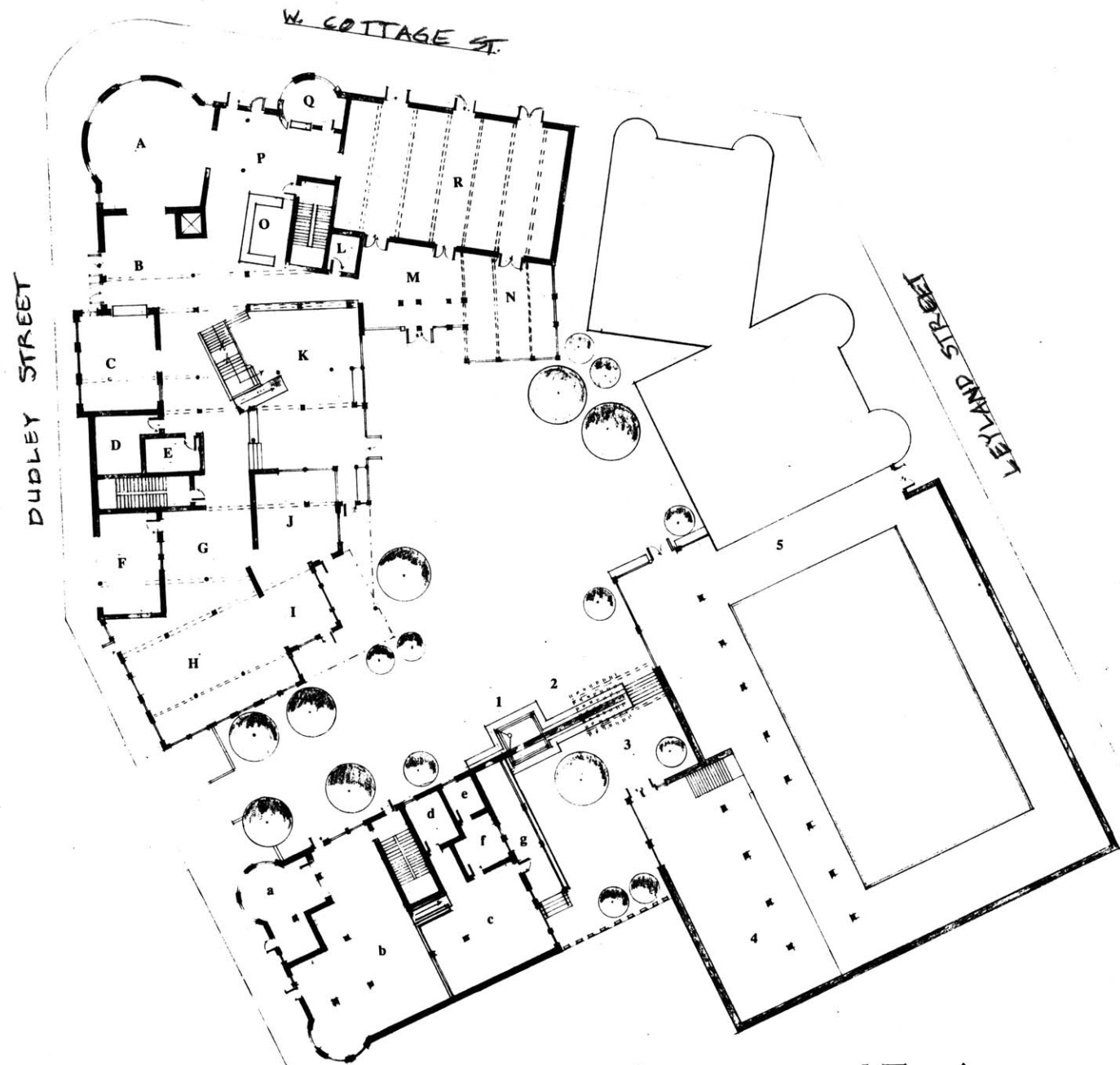
Pool building--first floor plan

Pool is at Leyland Street grade (five feet lower than Dudley Street grade level). Locker rooms are at Leyland grade also.
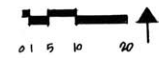
A. Main meeting room
B. Entry
C. Administration and coat check
D. Women's room
E. Men's room
F. News Stand
G. Career Resource Center
H. Career Resource Library and Skills Bank
I. Study Alcove
J. Study Alcove
K. Sunken "Winter Garden"/ Gathering Place
L. Accessible uni-sex rest room
M. Study corridor/ activity area
N. Greenhouse
O. Snack counter/ concessions
P. Lobby for theater/film auditorium
Q. Ticket Booth
R. Auditorium

a. Day Care Kitchen
b. Day Care Lower Level
c. Day Care Upper Level
d. Children's Rest room

e. Staff Rest room
f. Teacher's Lounge
g. Back Porch

1. Fountain (bi-level with twirling plexiglass birds)
2. Seating along wall
3. Upper garden
4. Pool overlook and sitting (locker rooms below)
5. Pool building

W. COTTAGE ST.

DUDLEY STREET

LEYLAND STREET

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DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Main building--second floor plan

At the top of the main stairs is another informal gathering place, serving the second floor. Also on this floor are the major after school program spaces. These include the academic resource center, which includes classrooms, tutoring areas, and study space. Bookshelves are located around the perimeter. The academic resource center could be run as a satellite of the Dudley Library or Roxbury Community College, with educators from Boston area schools and libraries donating favorite and up-to-date. The academic resource center should be appropriate for a variety of age levels, from middle-school to college. The projection room is on the second floor, as are four rooms which could be used as after school day care or which could be appropriated by specific youth initiatives. These rooms are intended to be more age-specific with rooms that can be appropriated by 7-9 year olds, 10-11 year olds, 12-14 year olds ; 15-17 year olds. Each age group could work with their own adult facilitator.

Annex--second floor plan

The second floor of the annex is an open art studio which can run classes and be used on a drop-in basis. Sewing machines are also located on this floor.

Pool--second floor plan

The ceiling of the locker rooms is open for sitting and relaxing or watching swim events.

A. Open to below
B. After school program space
C. After school program space
D. Women's Rest room
E. Men's Rest room
F. Roof of News Stand
G. Academic Resource Center
H. Study Alcove
I. Classroom
J. Classroom
K. Older teen program space
L. Gathering Area
M. Video Production Area and Projection Booth
N. Accessible Uni-sex Rest room
O.-P. Counseling/ Negotiation Program Area
Q. Open to below

a.-b. Art studios and sewing area
1. Open to below

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DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

NORTH

Main building--third floor plan

Music rooms, music library, dance and exercise rooms, and radio station/recording area are all located on this floor. Music rooms include practice rooms performance areas.

Annex--third floor plan:

The third floor of the annex is to be used as a weight room

A. **Dance/exercise room**
B. **Dance/exercise**
C. **Music classroom/ group practice room**
D. **Women's Rest room**
E. **Men's Rest room**
F. **Music Center**
G. **Music Library**
H.-I **Music Center Teaching Areas**
J. **Open Jamming Area**
K. **Small Practice Rooms**

a. **Weight Room**

1. **Roof of pool building**

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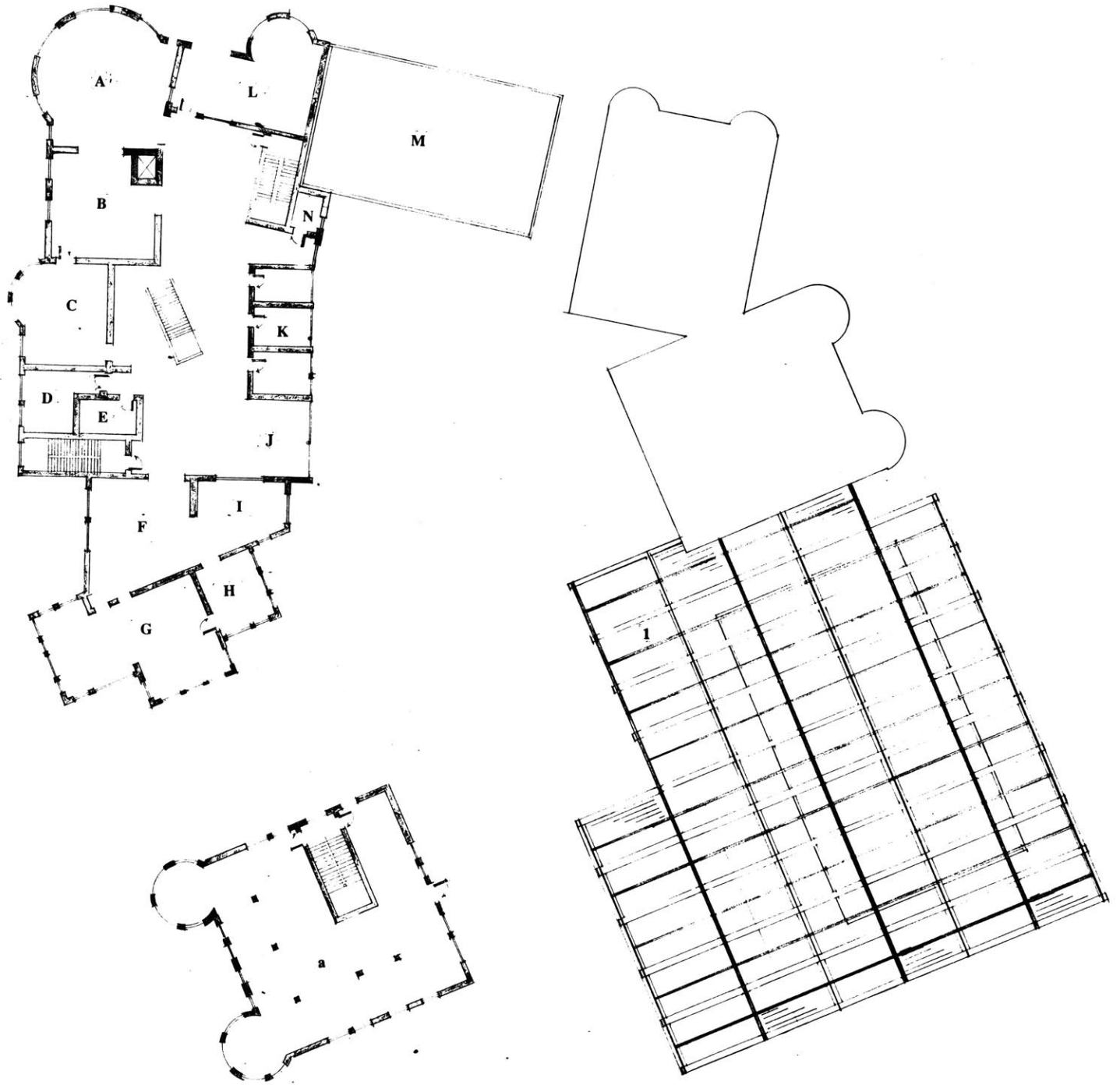
DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
THIRD FLOOR PLAN

0 1 5 10 20   NORTH

Section through annex and courtyard facing south:

1. Day care
2. Woodshop
3. Pool Building
4. Art Studio
5. Weight Room

a. fountain
b. seating
c. trellis
d. upper garden

The annex is scaled to be similar to the housing stock in the neighborhood. It is intended to mediate between the scale of housing uses and the relatively larger scale of the community building.

The weight room and the woodshop are separated from the main community building, because it is assumed that they would attract young men, in particular young men who "don't do programs," but would be interested in using a resource that is not specifically tied to a social service program.

The placement of the day care near the woodshop would probably require at least a two hour separation on the ceiling of the woodshop. The active uses of the day care are not directly adjacent to the woodshop.

Children and young men are often segregated in planning; uses for men and children are therefore purposefully placed close together, to encourage possible interaction.

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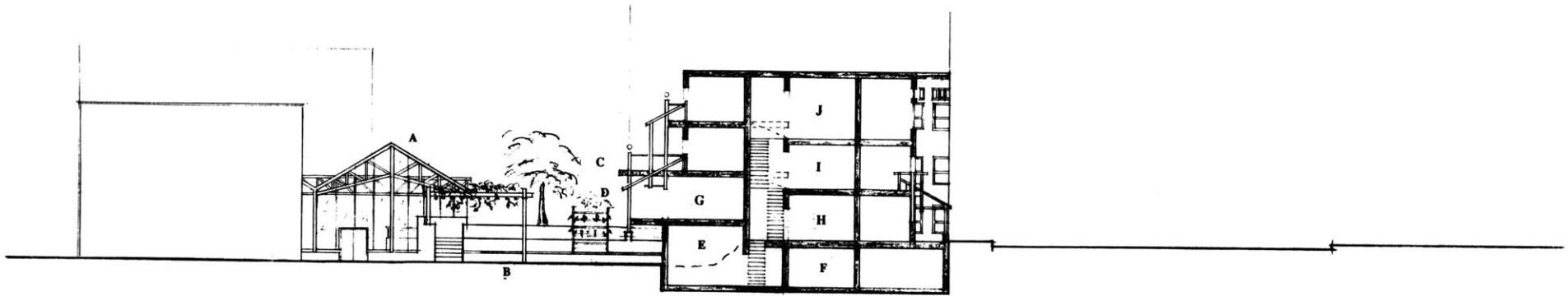
**DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
SECTION THROUGH POOL, GARDEN, AND ANNEX
FACING SOUTH**

Section through pool building, garden, and annex facing north:

Swimming in this pool should feel like swimming in a greenhouse. The exterior walls are constructed of masonry at the first floor level with wood and glass above. The pool is spanned by a combination of parallel chord trusses and triangular trusses. Wood posts are 12 inches square and are placed 12 feet apart on center. The wood post is intended to relate to the wood structure of the outside trellises, the back porch of the annex, and the wood/masonry structure of the main building. Plants can be hung from the lower trusses, and if enough plants are used, they can help to mitigate the effect of heat gain in the pool building. There are plenty of doors to open for cross-ventilation and airiness on summer days, and these help to mitigate the effect of heat gain in pool building. Leaves from plants might fall in the pool; these can be scooped out with net. If this is a major problem, plants could be grouped primarily over non-pool areas. Plexiglass should be used instead of regular glass, to diffuse light. Pieces of colored glass or glass prisms could be hung in trusses so that there will be streaks of colored light in pool building.
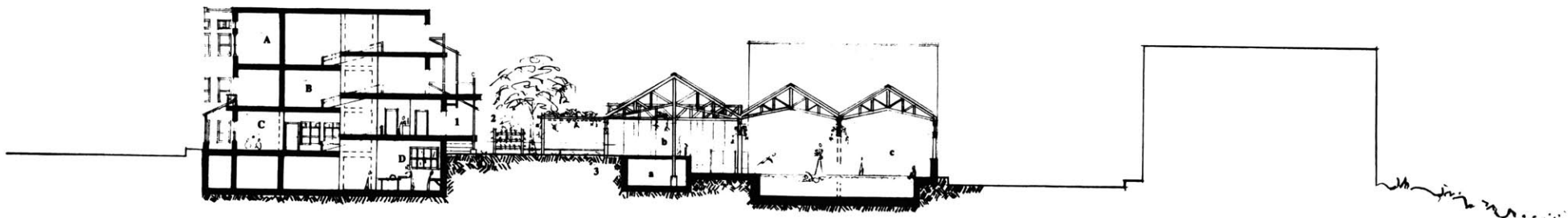
DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
SECTION THROUGH ANNEX, GARDEN, AND POOL
FACING NORTH

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Section through the auditorium, greenhouse, and courtyard looking west

DUDLEY TRIANGLE COMMUNITY CENTER
SECTION THROUGH AUDITORIUM, GREENHOUSE,
COURTYARD, AND GARDEN
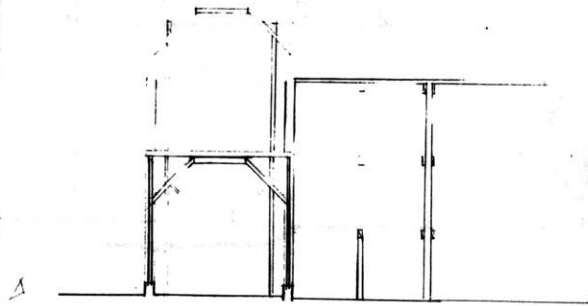**FACING WEST**

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**Section through main community building
looking north**

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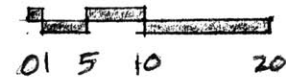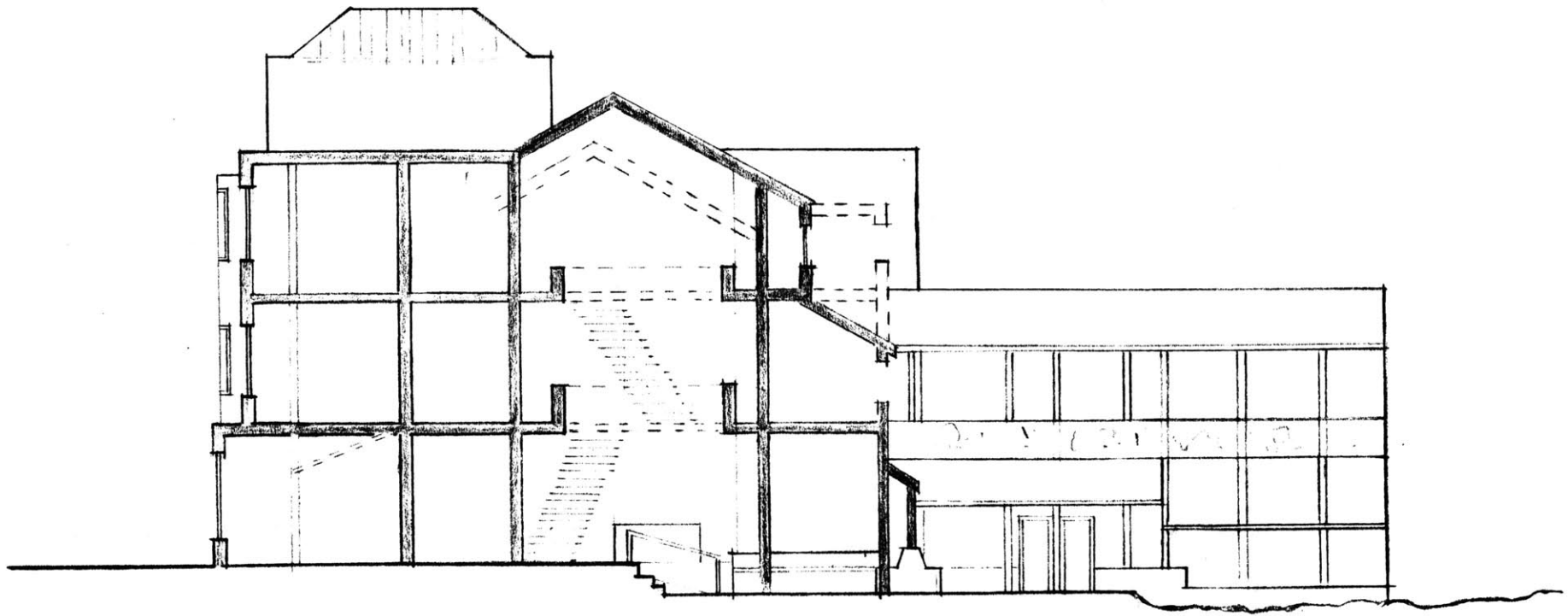
Section through West Cottage Street wing looking north--rough sketch

CHAPTER FIVE:
Issues and Lessons

Translating strengths

DSNI is undoubtedly successful at building a respectful organization which encourages youth hope, which treats youth with respect, and which views youth as resources. The agency is truly devoted to the ideology of empowerment and grassroots process. According to Rogelio Whittington, the new executive director of DSNI, "Community agencies still do the same thing they accuse people downtown of doing . DSNI is the only agency I've worked with in 25 years that's doing the opposite." The young people who work with DSNI clearly value the structure and ideology of DSNI and find that the agency is different from other organizations in the area. John Barros finds the other youth services in Dudley to be poorly suited to his interests. He says

What's different about DSNI is they will organize...(DSNI) changes all the time, going   through this evolutionary process, nothing is fixed. Other agencies get caught up in things,   everyone has a job. Here they are really get into things, really working with residents.

He says of the DSNI staff, " They have to want to do it. They're not just getting paid. They actually care ."

The actions of younger children seem to indicate that they too feel that DSNI staff are particularly caring. The fact that Dudley-area children spend their time running around a storefront office
rather than a youth center is meaningful. The qualities of DSNI's office--its visibility and physical accessibility, the openness of its staff, its evolutionary quality, and its willingness to engage with youth on a drop-in basis are all qualities that need to be emulated in any new youth programs. As well, the interest of young people indicates that children and teenagers want to be involved in activities that have some relevance to their experience in the neighborhood. Particularly in an environment such as Dudley where many children have to shoulder adult responsibilities too young, it is not enough to segregate youth and offer programs which just take up time but do not build to anything larger, which do not help youth affect the course of their own lives or the direction of the neighborhood. DSNI is valuable because it has the potential to link youth programs to neighborhood change.

Despite these organizational and ideological strengths, DSNI has not yet had a powerful impact on many of the issues it was organized to address. Clearly the agency has been highly successful in developing a physical master plan and attracting attention and resources. Yet, youth workers and youth continue to speak of powerlessness and despair in the neighborhood. DSNI is praised for its organizing ability, its emphasis on unity, and its belief in the hope and resources which exist in the community. At the same time, youthworkers and residents describing the neighborhood talk of disunity, political powerlessness, poor communication networks, and hopelessness.

This apparent paradox seems to be due in part to the tremendous amount of work and resources which have been directed towards getting DSNI's physical planning activities off the ground. While the agency has a tripartite structure balancing community organizing and human development and physical development, physical planning activities are much more fully

developed, and more substantially funded, than other aspects of DSNI's work. To a certain extent, organizing and human development work has been happening at the service of the physical goals in the neighborhood. For example, organizing campaigns are directed towards neighborhood clean-up and beautification or towards reclaiming a park. Human development projects such as the Young Architects and Planners project also serve to advance the goals of the physical master plan. Of course, DSNI views its physical goals as ultimately circling around and reinforcing organizing and human development. Still, there is a need for organizing and human development plans to be more specifically directed at social goals. It is ultimately the social not the physical issues in the neighborhood which are hurting residents the most.

The problem of an over-emphasis on the physical development aspect of the Dudley master plan may soon be rectified. DSNI is about to go through several transformations. Overall, the agency is moving from an organizing phase into an implementation phase. With basic services and monies committed for physical development, DSNI is now in the position of assuring that commitments are met . DSNI is also moving from a focus on its physical development plans to a focus on human development plans. The shift in agency function's is not necessarily an easy one. Historically, many non-profit agencies have difficulty moving from organizing to implementation. This has been true for agencies which are in the business of implementing services as well as for agencies who are in the business of implementing development. While there are many models of participatory decision-making, there are fewer models of participatory implementation. As DSNI evolves, it needs to assure that its ideology and caring, its focus on participation and involvement can be translated into new forms.

The agency's initial experiences working with youth provide some indication of the kinds of issues which may arise as DSNI embarks on the next stage of its work. DSNI is not a permanent entity, but it hopes that its strengths and goals have lasting power. Yet, initial experiences indicate that DSNI's strength have not always be programmatically transmitted into the agency's youth initiatives. As DSNI moves into the implementation stages of its work, it needs to focus on processes and products that can become imbued with the kind of energy that supports the agency itself.

Young Architects and Planners Program

The young architects and planners program successfully involved 43 youth in a planning process. Programs for two community centers were created. The older teen group produced plans, elevations and a model of the West Cottage street community center. The middle teen group produced designs for a West Cottage Street center and a Moreland Street Community Center. The youngest group developed models and drawings of individual rooms. One of the members of the older teen youth group used his experience in the Young Architects and Planners, and the encouragement of DSNI staff, as a stepping stone to architecture school. He is currently enrolled at Wentworth Institute of Technology. Another YAP member, from the middle teen group, was placed in a summer internship with PFD architect/planner Harold Raymond. Members of the youngest group asked to have the project extended.

YAP Coordinator Gail Sullivan and DSNI human development director Andrea Nagel produced a booklet about the project called Youthful Visions. This booklet not only described the design process but used the project to coalesce thoughts about community control, human development, crime, economic and educational problems, physical development, and the future of neighborhood youth. This booklet will be used for fundraising. It is also being sold and distributed to residents to get them interested in the

project. The professional design for the building is being developed by Gail Sullivan, who will try to incorporate ideas developed by the youth.

All of these are positive outcomes. However, the primary underlying goal of the project was to enable youth to control and direct physical development in their neighborhood. This goal was harder to realize. Staff and volunteers working on the project wanted to figure out what youth wanted in the community center. They wanted children and teenagers to be wholly responsible for designing the center, so that the facility would truly belong to the youth of the neighborhood. While this is a positive goal, volunteers ended up being confused about how to elicit design ideas from young people. They spent much of the project time asking youth to carry out what are essentially college level architecture exercises. The older teen group was most capable and interested in the specifics of the architectural design. However, the exercises used were simply too abstract for younger teens and children. Facilitators for the young teens sometimes allowed youth to build models and sometimes they took on the work themselves and ended up merely directing youth. What staff and volunteers envisioned as an empowering participatory design process at times ended up being a not very absorbing arts and crafts project. Unfortunately, many of the youth models were accidentally thrown away. This is important because it works against the empowerment goal of the program. The YAP program highlights the need to take care and be realistic about what messages programs actually do send out. Did the people who lost their models feel empowered by their participation in a design process or did they learn that adult teachers don't care enough about their work to protect it from being destroyed?

Process-oriented programs which DSNI has evolved--including the Young Architects and Planners Program, the youth and adult focus groups--have not always been able to maintain the strength of DSNI's first organizing activities. Sometimes, as in the case of the Young Architects and Planners, the energy is there, but a process for directing that energy was unclear to staff and volunteers. Sometimes, a well organized process is developed but the needed energy is missing. This seems to have been the case in the sparsely attended adult focus groups on the community center. DSNI's ability to recognize its mistakes and learn from them is one of its great strengths as an agency. In Youthful Visions, Gail Sullivan and Andrea Nagel note that project planning and implementation were too quick. Often facilitators met just minutes before a session was to begin to organize activities. This doesn't work. The youth could sense when adults aren't quite prepared. If the facilitators weren't fully organized and ready to go at the beginning of every session, youth quickly lost interest and find other things to direct their attention to. For the youngest group, this sometimes meant fighting and teasing each other. People in the middle group flirted, or retreated and were silent. Youth could also sense when facilitators disagreed about issues such as discipline. Facilitators needed to spend more time setting ground rules for each other, so that youth received a fairly consistent message.

Developing age-appropriate processes is another issue. Planners and community activists who do not have a background in education aren't always aware of the cognitive stages of development. For example, the facilitators with the youngest group realized halfway through their project that map-reading skills were generally not developed by children until they were older than the youth in our age group. Up until that time, we were asking youth to organize and draw building plans, essentially building maps, a task that was almost impossible for the pre-teens. The YAP project assumed that all youth could adopt a proto-professional role in the programming and design of a community center. As it turns out, this may not have been the best way to gain access to youth knowledge.

The YAP project was an opportunity, but it wasn't quite the right opportunity for all age groups. It was most appropriate for older age groups and had a clearly positive impact on the two youth who went on to other architecture/ planning activities. In focusing on future neighborhood change, the project emphasized hope, the sense that youth could put their own imprint on the community. Ray Lorenzo, an architect who develops youth participatory design projects in low income neighborhoods, has said that asking youth about the future is inherently respectful. He believes that, because the future is unknown to both youth and adults, children are as expert and knowledgeable as adults when it comes to envisioning what might be. Safety was a primary concern that youth wanted to address by designing and building a community center. In the YAP program itself, there was some physical fighting and name-calling among the youngest group, even though this group had set its own rules disallowing such activity.

Nubian Youth Group

The proposed community center is not going to be meaningful unless it is embedded in something larger. In fact, an overly tight focus on the community center may distract DSNI from more immediate things which it could do. For example, when the principal at the Dearborn School told the Nubian Youth Group that he didn't want them tutoring at the Dearborn, youth in the group accepted that rejection fairly quickly. They ended up thinking that maybe they were all really too busy anyway and needed to spend time getting to know each other and sponsoring a unity day party. Given that the group had spent several months talking about mentoring and tutoring, perhaps they did not all want to give up as quickly as they did. Adults at DSNI could have supported them in pushing for their original agenda and could have helped them determine how to get around the obstacle of a negative principal. They could negotiate. They could tutor in a different location. They could organize a coalition which publicly demanded the right of neighborhood youth to tutor in the schools. Clearly, the community organizers at DSNI know how to deal with rejection and keep pushing. Some strategizing with the youth around those issues could have been valuable. DSNI's planning role should not overwhelm its potentially powerful advocacy role.

The fact that DSNI has long term ideas for creating opportunity and respect should not distract them from more immediate chances to do the same. Short-term building, in social as well as physical terms, is crucial because of the transience of any youth population. DSNI's organizing philosophy stresses the connection between short-term victories and long-term planning. Yet, many of the short-term victories have not been victories which address crucial issues of safety, hope, opportunity, and respect for young people. While youth and adult organizers have been successful in building a powerful resource base, that base is still not being used up to its potential. For example, the Nubian Youth Group wanted to contribute to the Gus Newport going-away party, a community celebration which was attended by 800 people. They decided to run the coat check area at the party. Given the talent and commitment of this group of youth, they could have been encouraged to take on a more public role, one which might have helped them to begin fashioning the leadership roles they envision for themselves.

People and Resources Invested in Dudley's Environment

DSNI's organizing campaign isn't specifically focused on youth but it includes them. Youth have always been enthusiastic participants in clean-ups and cook-outs. However, DSNI's community organizing activities, while successful in terms of turn-out, are not always the best use of the Dudley resident resource base. The crime watches and tenant associations that DSNI has supported are essential for a safe community. However, the neighborhood-wide community organizing activities that DSNI sponsors are not always directed to the crucial issues in the neighborhood nor do they help people develop themselves and the community. Residents continue to be frustrated with the low level of basic city services. Despite DSNI's political gains, neighbors still have to call repeatedly to attain basic services. DSNI's most recent organizing event was a neighborhood clean-up and cook-out. Residents and block groups were invited to meet at the DSNI office where they could pick up rakes and disposal bins loaned by the City of Boston. Each tenant group was supposed to go back to their block, clean a lot or their street or yards for a few hours and then return to Mary Hannon Park for a cook-out. Dudley residents are capable of a great deal more than picking up lots. The City of Boston should not be loaning its rakes and trash cans to the Dudley neighbors; the city should be fulfilling its basic maintenance duties. On-going maintenance is important in any building or neighborhood, but cleaning lots is like cleaning house. No matter how hard you scrub, things eventually get dirty again. Picking up lots is not a bad activity for a fledgling grassroots organization, but after 8 years, DSNI should be moving onto activities which take better advantage of resident resources and which more specifically address community needs. Cleaning up lots is, after a while, a disempowering activity and is a misuse of the resources of a fairly well organized community.

DSNI is able to organize people for short-term victories. It is able to identify the issues that residents want to resolve. Yet, the agency does not always seem to forcefully link its long term vision with its short term activities. The goals which DSNI seeks to realize through its long term plans need to be developed in its short-term organizing activities.

Another missed opportunity relates to the Latino community. DSNI's traditional weakness has been organizing in the Latino community. However, Hispanic youth activists at PRORC are working on exactly the same principles as DSNI. Victor Morales, street worker at Alianza Hispana, and Rogelio Whittington, soon to be executive director at DSNI, use very similar terms to describe adequate youth work. They both talk about going to the problem not waiting for the problem to come to you. DSNI's development of a youth organizing agenda offers an opportunity to begin reaching a base in the Latino community. Furthermore, Orchard Park has one of the most fully realized youth programs in the area. Its programs are youth-run. It has successfully acquired and redeveloped one community facility for youth and is in the process of acquiring a second building. Until recently, Orchard Park has been relatively less represented in DSNI. Orchard Park youth and youthworkers probably could provide a valuable resources and asking them to teach about their experiences might be a first step in breaking down the wall between Orchard Park and the rest of the Dudley Triangle.

Mary Hannon Park

DSNI's last major organizing victory was the reclaiming of Mary Hannon Park and the scheduling of activities for 200 youth. Mary Hannon Park is symbolically important. It is the largest park space in the neighborhood. Moving Bird Street's programs to Mary Hannon localized resources which had previously been considered inaccessible. The park has remained relatively free of

drug dealing. While DSNI was criticized by some for taking on a service provider role, the agency felt that they were reclaiming land which had been lost to the neighborhood and illustrating the need for neighborhood based services for youth. They intended the summer camp at Mary Hannon to be a kind of demonstration project which would be picked up by existing service agencies in subsequent seasons.

For DSNI, to develop programs which will be run by existing service agencies is problematic. DSNI's appeal lies in its difference from existing service providers. Almost all agencies talk about empowerment. However, residents and youth workers agree that the 'ask the people' scenario rarely gets played out in existing service agencies. Current agencies feel they are working at their limit and youth complain that youth service offerings are inappropriate. For example, DSNI's summer camp at Mary Hannon was created to gain control of a park and to illustrate the need for recreation in Dudley. As promised, DSNI spun off its recreation programs the following summer and now Bird Street is running the camp. Bird Street was already in the business of doing basic recreation programs in its building at Uphams Corner; now it has moved some of its activities do a different spot. This seems to represent more of a shift in resources than a growth in resources. Furthermore, when drug dealing moves from Mary Hannon to Leyland that's good for Mary Hannon but does it really change things in the neighborhood?

Community centers

The results from the Mary Hannon summer camp have resonance for DSNI's proposed community center DSNI has not yet decided who will run the community center or how it will run. Some envision a building which can be used by existing service providers. This kind of a building is not necessarily an asset because existing agencies generally don't have the funding or staffing to operate their own facilities up to capacity. More space is not necessarily what most local social services need. And, more of the same kind of services is not necessarily what youth need.

DSNI Deputy Director Paul Yelder has an alternate vision of the youth center. He sees the proposed youth center as a kind of "mini-DSNI, operated by a community board, staffed with community organizers, and supported by a membership base of neighborhood residents. This form for the community center seems to have more power than the creation of a building which acts as a shell that existing service agencies can move into.

The Public Facilities Department has been conducting research on community facilities. In the past year, the PFD has received more proposals for youth centers and community facilities than it can fund. One of the primary results to come out of the research so far is that the most difficult financing issue related to community centers is not funding capital costs but raising money for operations and management. PFD's research results, coupled with the recent experience of Dudley area non-profits, many of which have been forced to reduce services and several of which have closed, points to the importance of a focus on operating and programmatic costs. DSNI must develop systems for the sustainability of the community centers. It will be easier for DSNI to build a community center than it will be for a coalition of residents to run and maintain a center.

While a community center is a nice thing to have, there are issues of safety, hope, opportunity, and respect it can't address. There are also issues which can begin to be addressed prior to building a center or in the process of creating one. Like Victor

Morales, Rogelio Whittington says that youth workers need to "go to where the problem where it's happening physically not tell the problem to come to you." This is clearly a tactic that is not related to physical development. Whittington also says "Getting youth involved is a statement... prepare young people to take responsibility of all kinds." Meeting these goals can pre-date and lead to the construction of a community center.

In Dudley, the process of building a community center should be inverted. A coalition of people dedicated to intra-community mentoring and teaching should be formed, the planned neighborhood skills inventory should begin, and small scale construction should start, prior to the initiation of a large scale capital fund drive. In fact, DSNI might think about what its youth agenda would be if the community center piece dropped out. Clearly youth deserve more resources and facilities than they are getting, but the discussion around youth issues seems to have been too tightly focused on the community centers. DSNI estimates that building the proposed community centers will cost 7.5 million dollars. If this money wasn't going into bricks and mortar but was going directly to youth, what might it be able to accomplish?

Both DSNI's proposed community centers and existing facilities will continue to face difficulties and shortfalls of staff and money unless larger funding issues are addressed. DSNI's Interagency Collaborative was organized two years to address funding concerns. Yet, this group is still too loose to play an active role in refashioning policy. Currently, members of the Collaborative seem to have varying degrees of commitment to the group, which meets once a month. In order to shift the funding environment in which service providers do business, this Collaborative needs to be a much more active group. Another task of the collaborative and DSNI is enhancing communications between groups. Despite the existence of a collaborative, many service providers say that they aren't sure what others in the area are doing. Several service providers said that DSNI could help them by providing opportunities to get together and share resources. When considering who should be part of this collaborative, DSNI needs to include organizations which, though physically beyond the neighborhood's limits, have been deeply involved in youth issues in the neighborhood. This includes people at the AIDS Action Committee, Just-a-Start, the CLUB program, and Boston City Hospital.

Summary:

Safety in DSNI's human development and physical development projects is a safe haven--a building, a park, a storefront--where youth can be kids, playing or working under adult supervision. The community organizing component of DSNI sees safety in communication, the formation of crime watches and tenant associations. Hope is in plans and visions of the future and in an emphasis on the current strengths of the neighborhood. Respect is interpersonal. Opportunity is supposed to be the opportunity to make decisions. However, for youth, this chance at decision-making is sometimes too abstract. Decisions and results are too far apart. Opportunities in programs like Mary Hannon summer camp and the Young Architects and Planners program do not end up being very different from the kinds of opportunities offered by more traditional service programs.

"Chapter One: Youth issues" suggested ways of responding to issues of youth safety, hope, opportunity, and respect. Youth safety requires responses to crime which do not create additional threat, better information on crime, less glamorization of violence, alternative avenues for affiliation , identity, access to power, resources, decision-making, and action. Safety also

requires the support of existing violence prevention and crime abatement initiatives. Youth opportunity requires learning, employment, recreation, and social opportunities which are visible, accessible , and direct. It requires economic development ladders. It requires that long-term planning for the neighborhood is tied to short-term educational opportunities. Hope requires follow through, long-term commitments, adult-youth mentoring. Respect requires youth representation and decision-making.

To date, DSNI has emphasized hope and respect in its interactions with youth. It has not yet developed the kind of meaningful opportunities that allow for substantial change. It has seen safety for youth as the creation of a safe haven. In its initial development of youth programs, DSNI has developed the strengths of some existing empowerment and service agencies but has not avoided the pitfalls that service-based agencies have confronted: the inability to supply meaningful opportunity.

There are five programmatic models for working with youth in Dudley. DSNI needs to focus on the street work, whole needs, and empowerment models and see how they are similar to and different from service-based approaches. Empowerment agencies are similar to DSNI in ideology. Whole needs agencies are similar in their holistic approach and their connection between youth programming and community change. Yet, DSNI's youth-oriented activities to date, its young architects and planners program and summer camp tend to resemble more limited and less holistic approaches. These agencies provide a base for DSNI to explore programmatic forms which best suit its development mission.

While DSNI is not a service-provider agency, its approach to issues of youth safety, hope, opportunity, and respect tends to resemble an empowerment-oriented service provider approach more than the other potential approaches. For example, service-provider agencies provide safety by offering a physical safe haven, working with a local known population, offering adult oversight and transportation and cultivating respectful adult/youth relationships. Empowerment groups approach safety at a neighborhood scale by emphasizing violence prevention and by helping youth to define and understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to the police and other youth. Empowerment groups also stress psychological safety and a physical safe haven. For streetworkers, safety is the fulfillment of basic needs and assistance in decision-making about gangs, violence, and crime. Whole needs approach groups address safety at a neighborhood and programmatic scale and enforce high standards on staff and youth. Crisis-oriented groups offer a safe haven and interrupt explosive situations to prevent the escalation of violence.

Service providers offer opportunities in the form of sports, recreation, and trips or specific programs like GED and job readiness. Empowerment agencies offer the opportunity to influence community life as well as the opportunity to belong to a specific program. Empowerment groups often offer the possibility of changed status (by becoming a Drop-a-Dime street Lawyer, for example), transfer of skills, and the opportunity for group affiliation. Whole needs organizations such as Youthbuild work at building individual and community opportunity together and they address all facets of youth needs. To be true to its mandate, DSNI needs to find ways to incorporate, promote and support the programmatic features of whole needs, empowerment, and streetworker agencies.

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Keri Boehne, Program Officer, Teens as Community Resources: May 26, 1992.
Geoffrey Bynoe, Youth Leader, Orchard Park Housing Development: May 20, 1992.
Carlos Cruz, Director of Youth Services, Alianza Hispana: May 6, 1992.
Paul Elwood, Intern, Public Facilities Department: May 22, 1992.
Ros Everdall, Community Organizer, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative: May 29, 1992.
Gertrudes Fidalgo, Community Organizer, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative: May 8, 1992.
Evelyn Friedman-Vargas, Executive Director, Nuestra Comunidad: May 8, 1992.

Mary Gunn, Executive Director, Bird Street Community Center: May 4, 1992.
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Also, Eliezer Colon, Director of the Street Lawyers' Program, added comments during the Drop-a-Dime interview.

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